

B R I D G E S S TORY

10

**Kaoru
Mori**



BOARD- E.E.S. STORY

10

Kaoru
Mori

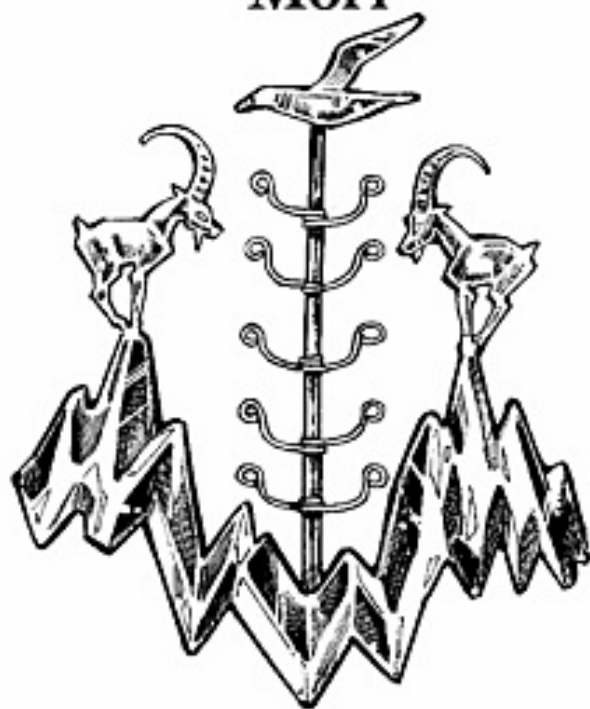




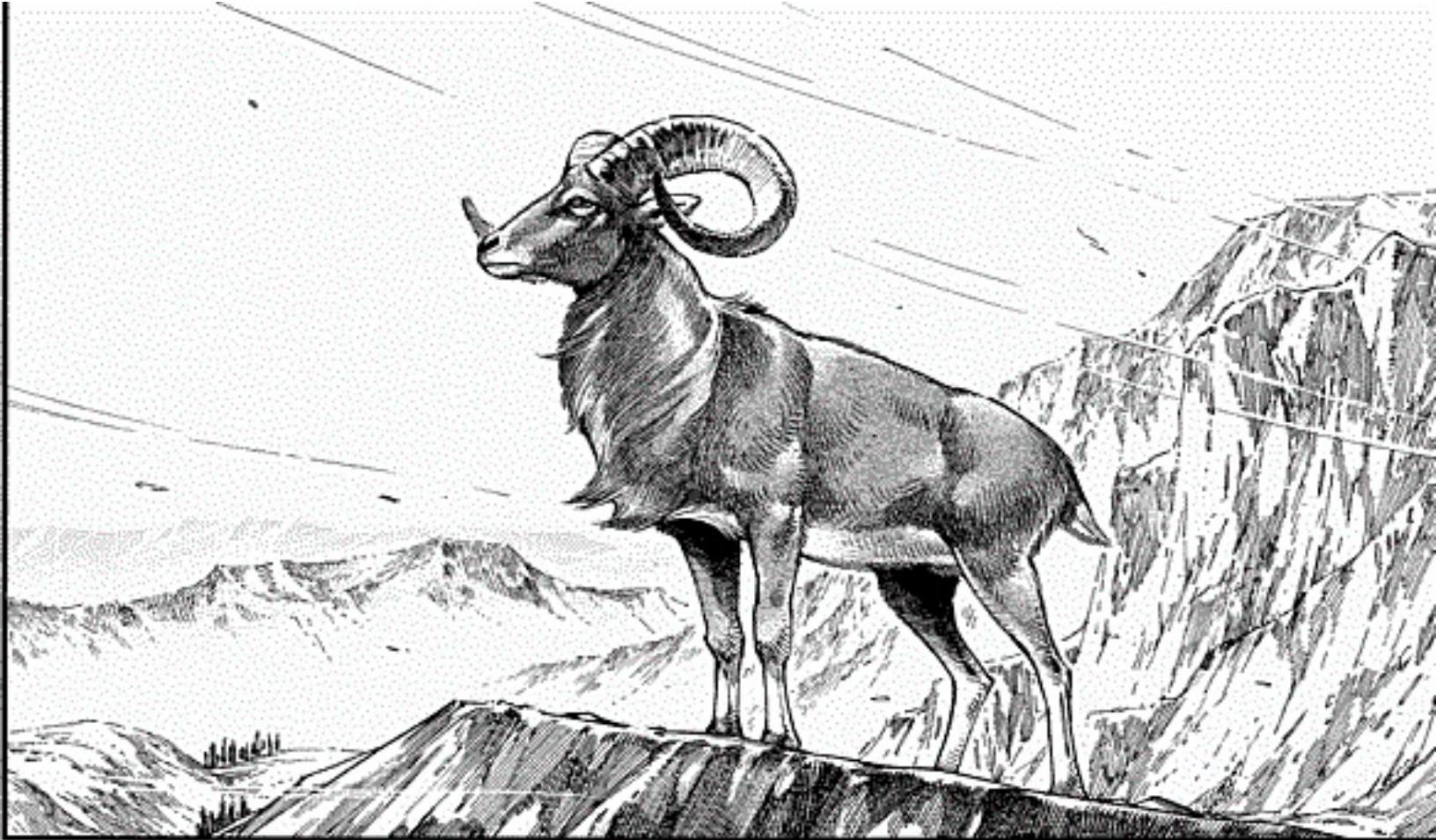
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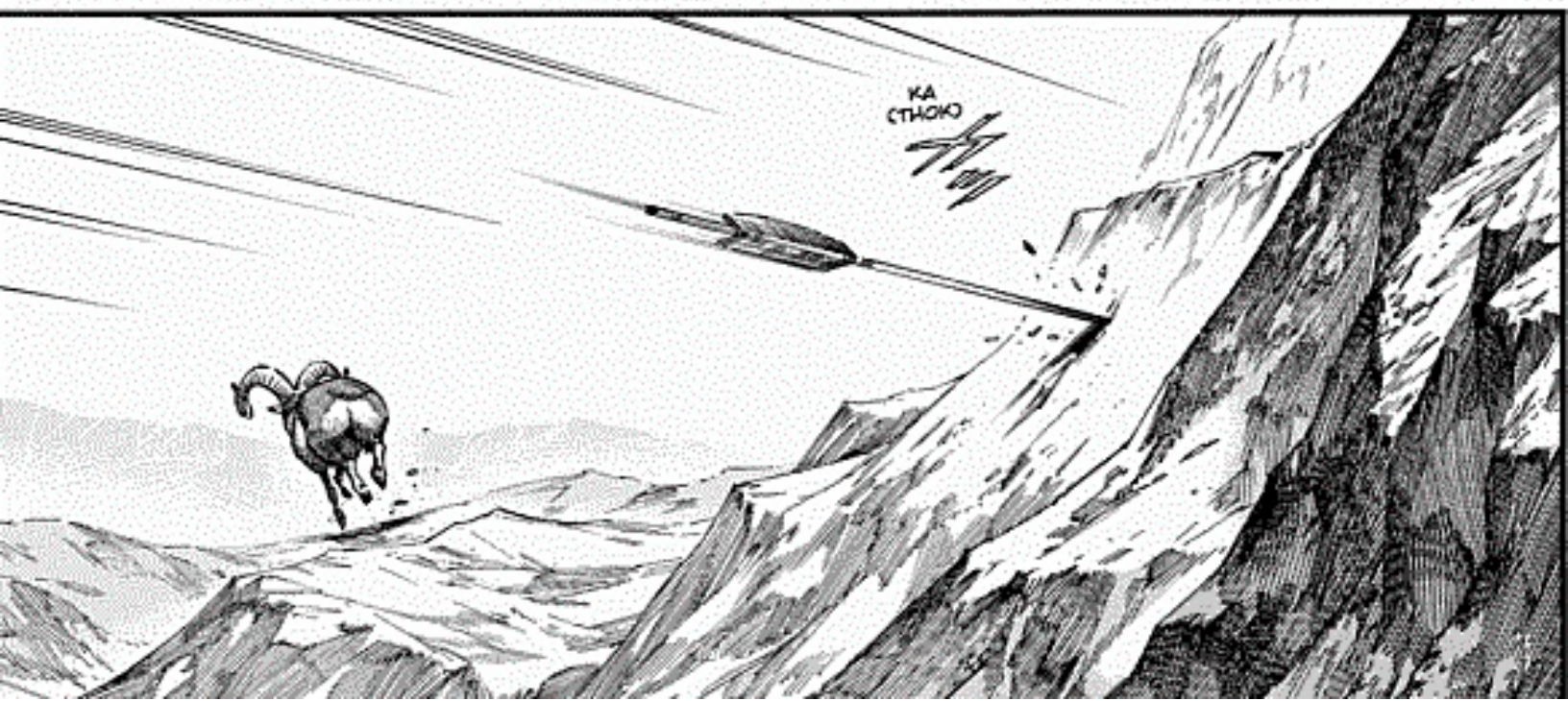
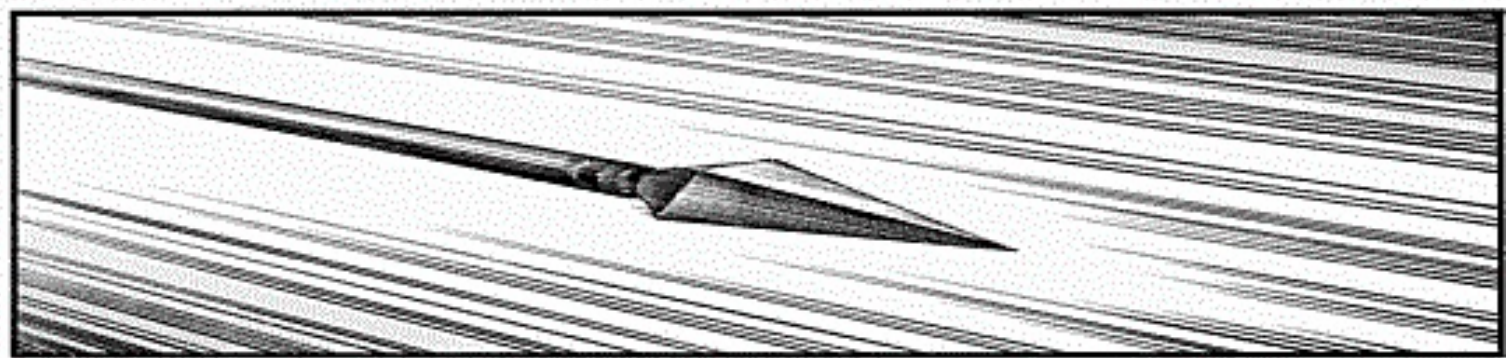


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CHAPTER 62
GAME





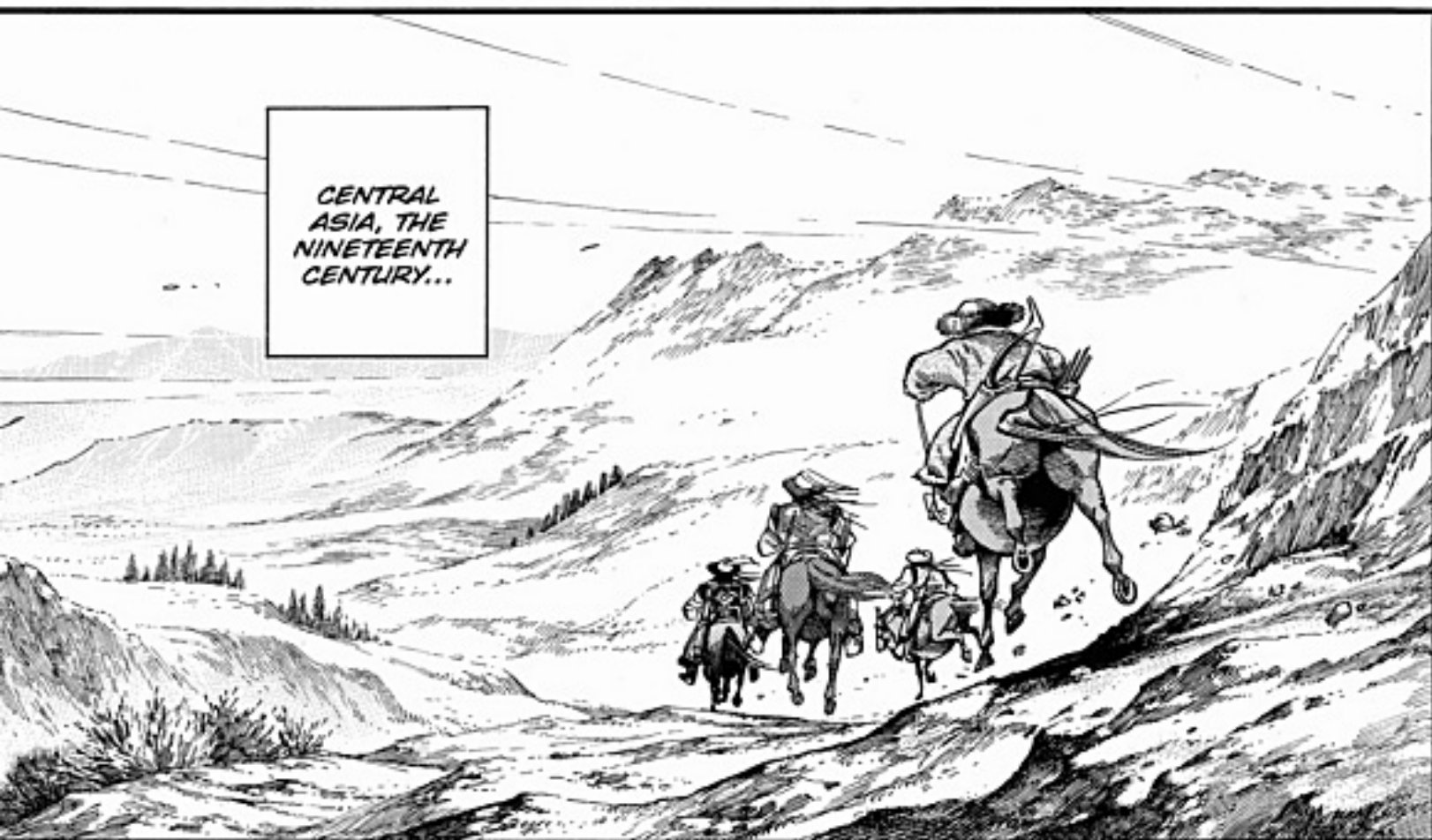








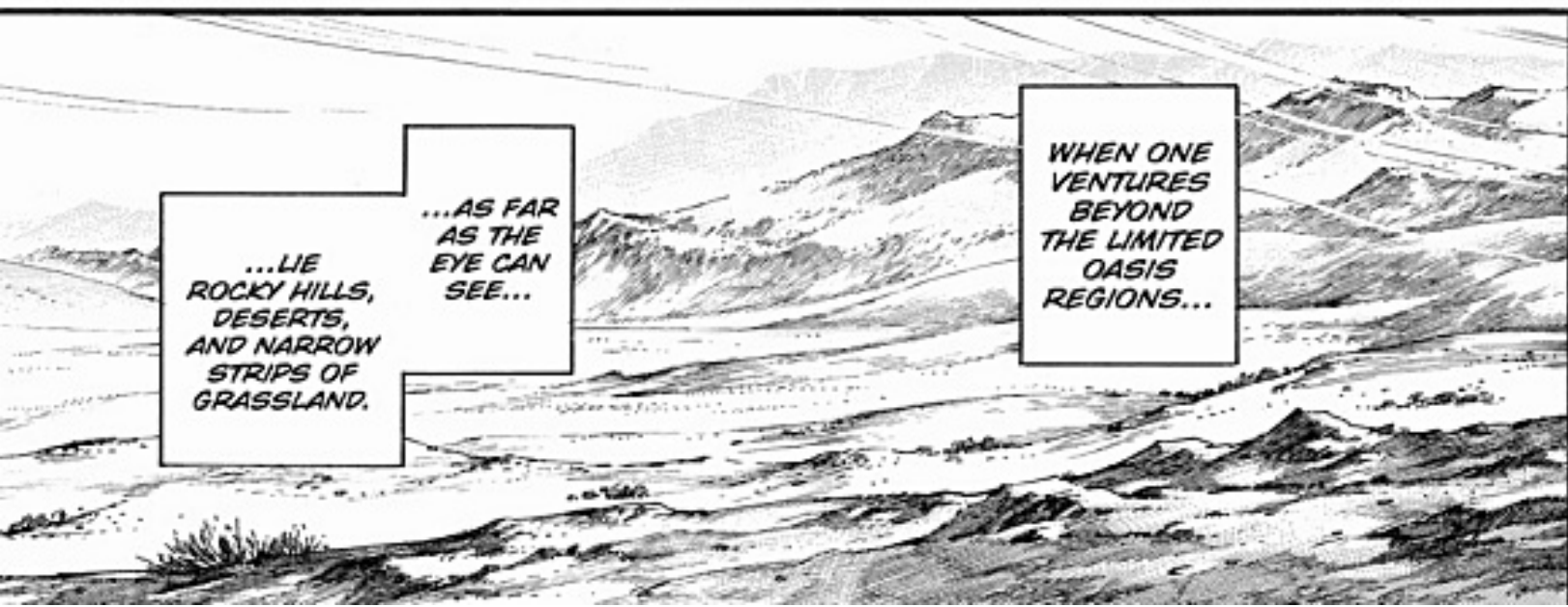
CENTRAL
ASIA, THE
NINETEENTH
CENTURY...

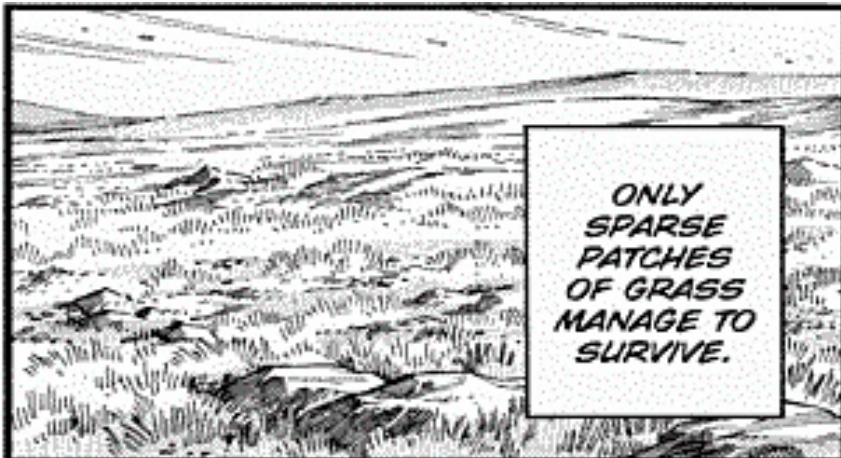


...LIE
ROCKY HILLS,
DESERTS,
AND NARROW
STRIPS OF
GRASSLAND.

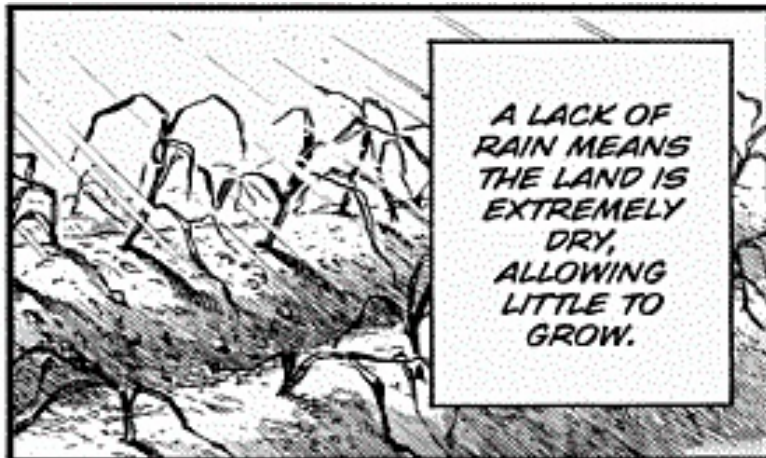
...AS FAR
AS THE
EYE CAN
SEE...

WHEN ONE
VENTURES
BEYOND
THE LIMITED
OASIS
REGIONS...

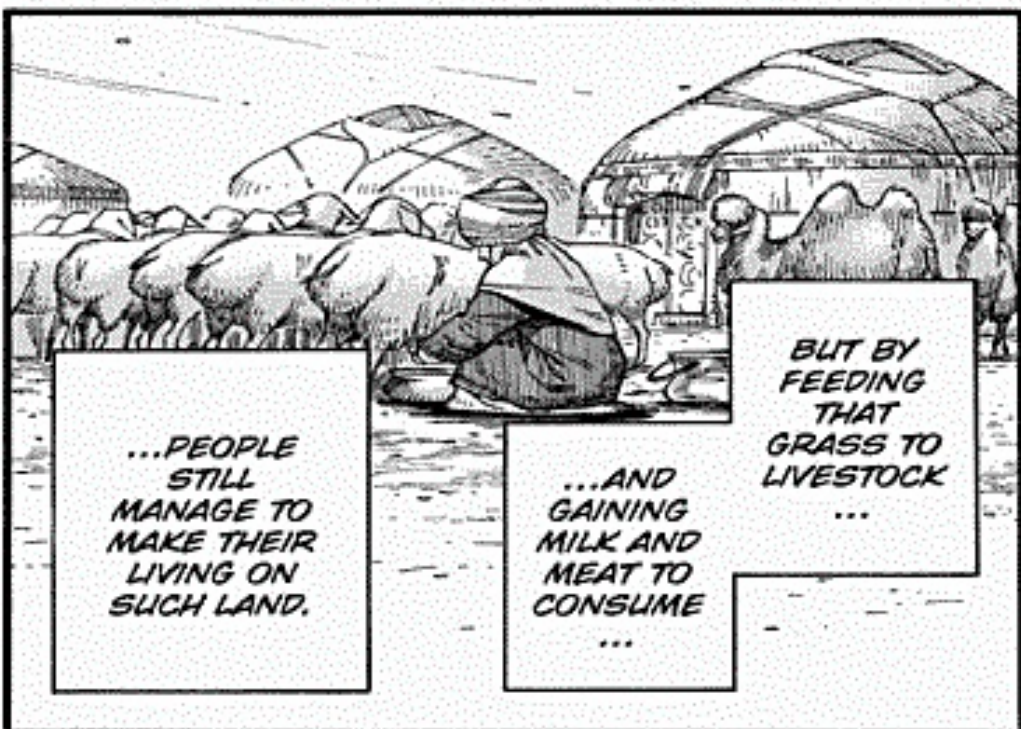




ONLY
SPARSE
PATCHES
OF GRASS
MANAGE TO
SURVIVE.



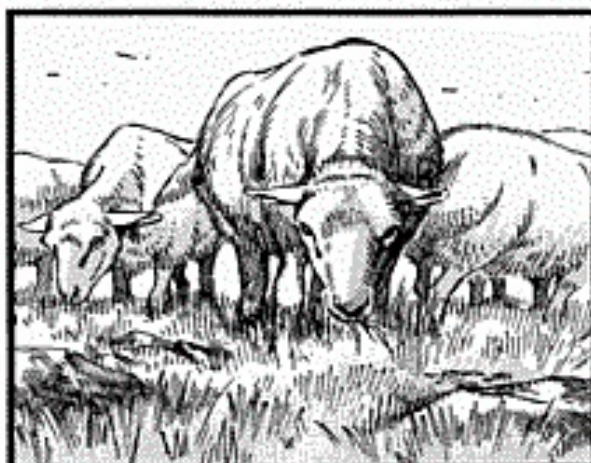
A LACK OF
RAIN MEANS
THE LAND IS
EXTREMELY
DRY,
ALLOWING
LITTLE TO
GROW.



...PEOPLE
STILL
MANAGE TO
MAKE THEIR
LIVING ON
SUCH LAND.

...AND
GAINING
MILK AND
MEAT TO
CONSUME
...

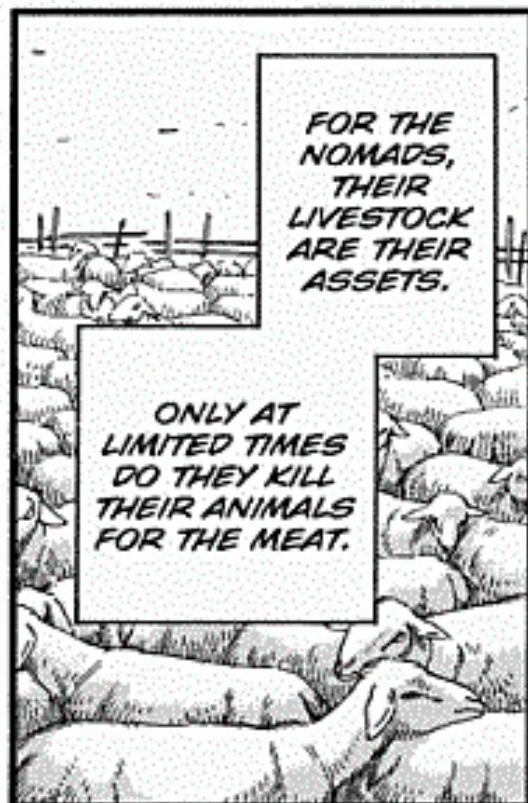
BUT BY
FEEDING
THAT
GRASS TO
LIVESTOCK
...



...AND
WHATEVER
GAME THEY
CAN HUNT.



THEIR
DAILY
MEALS
MOSTLY
CONSIST
OF DAIRY
PRODUCTS
AND
BREAD...



FOR THE
NOMADS,
THEIR
LIVESTOCK
ARE THEIR
ASSETS.

ONLY AT
LIMITED TIMES
DO THEY KILL
THEIR ANIMALS
FOR THE MEAT.







SO STAY
HERE AND
WATCH.

YOU
WON'T BE
ABLE TO
SHOOT IN
A CHASE
YET.



WE'LL
WAIT
HERE.



.....ALL
RIGHT.



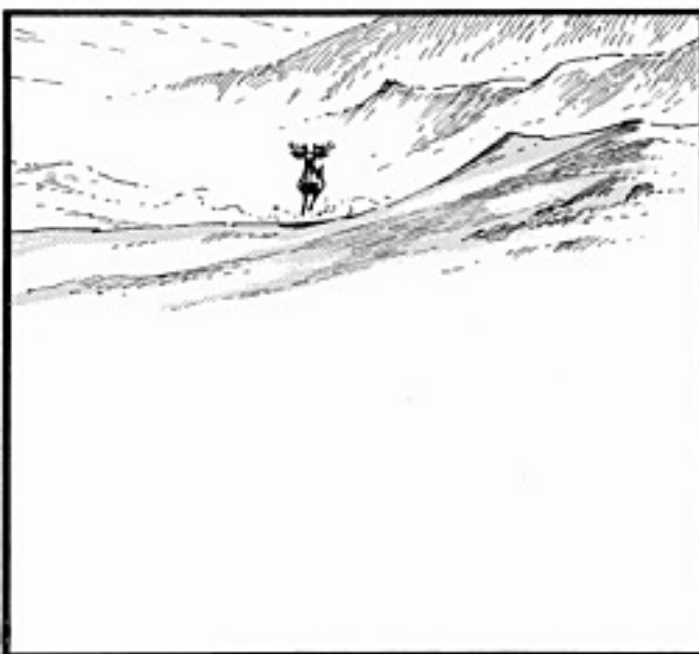
YES.

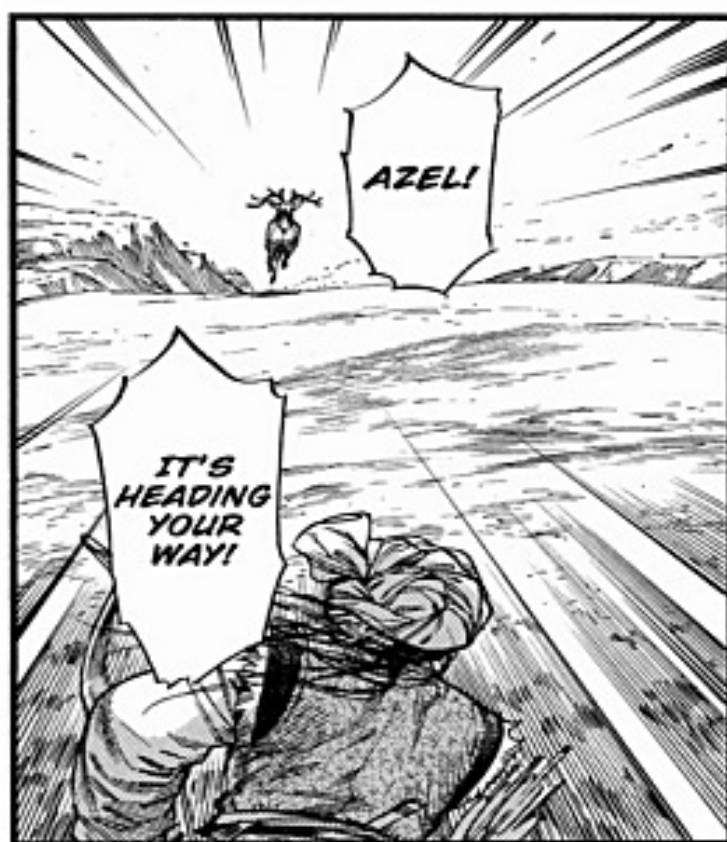
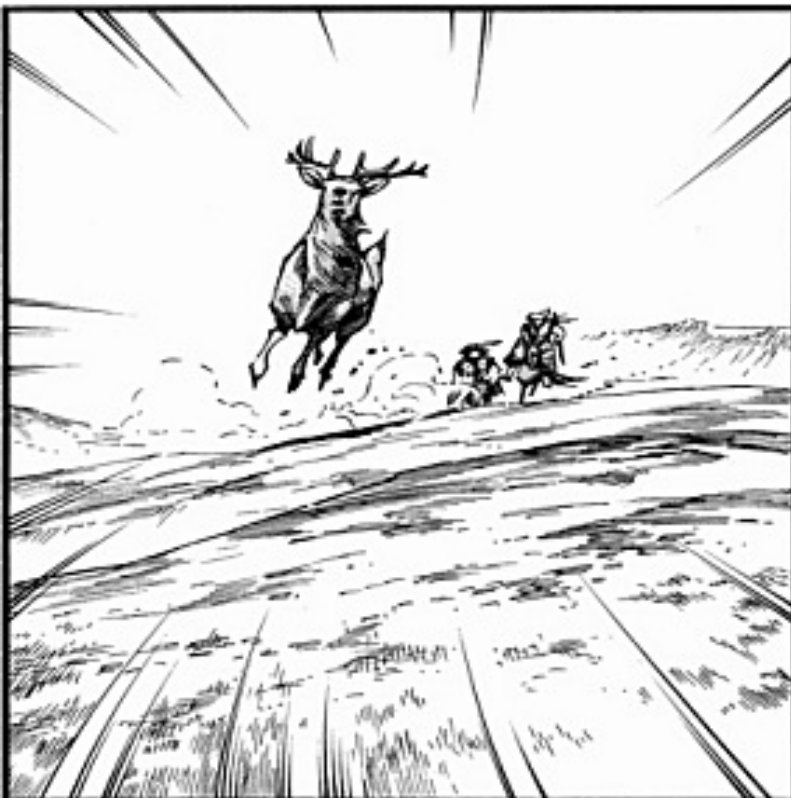


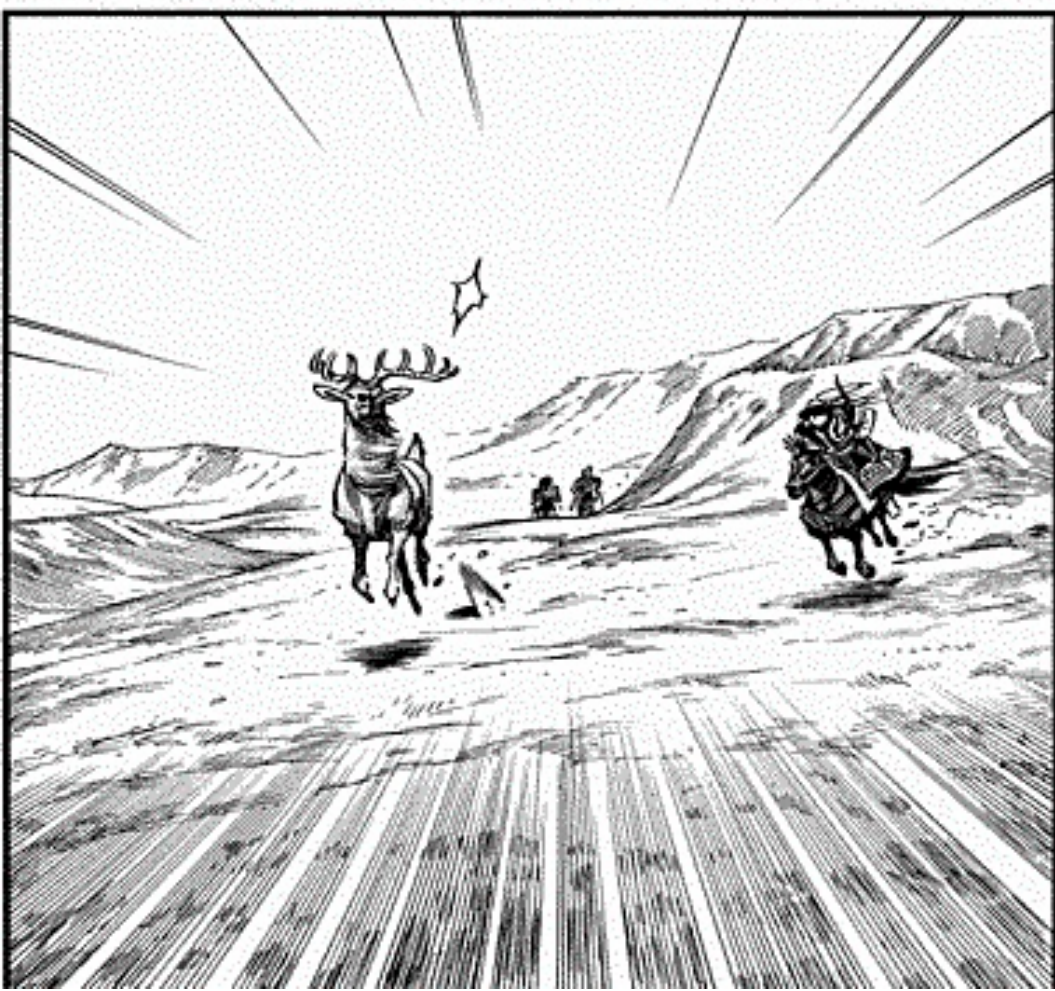
...TRYING
TO LEARN
THE BOW?

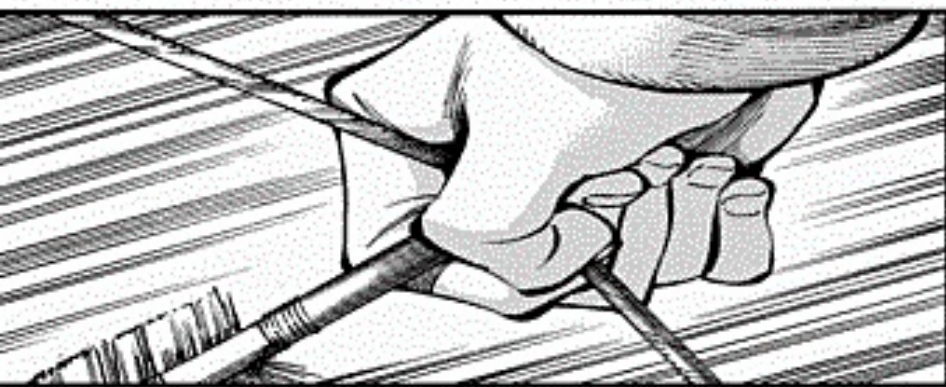
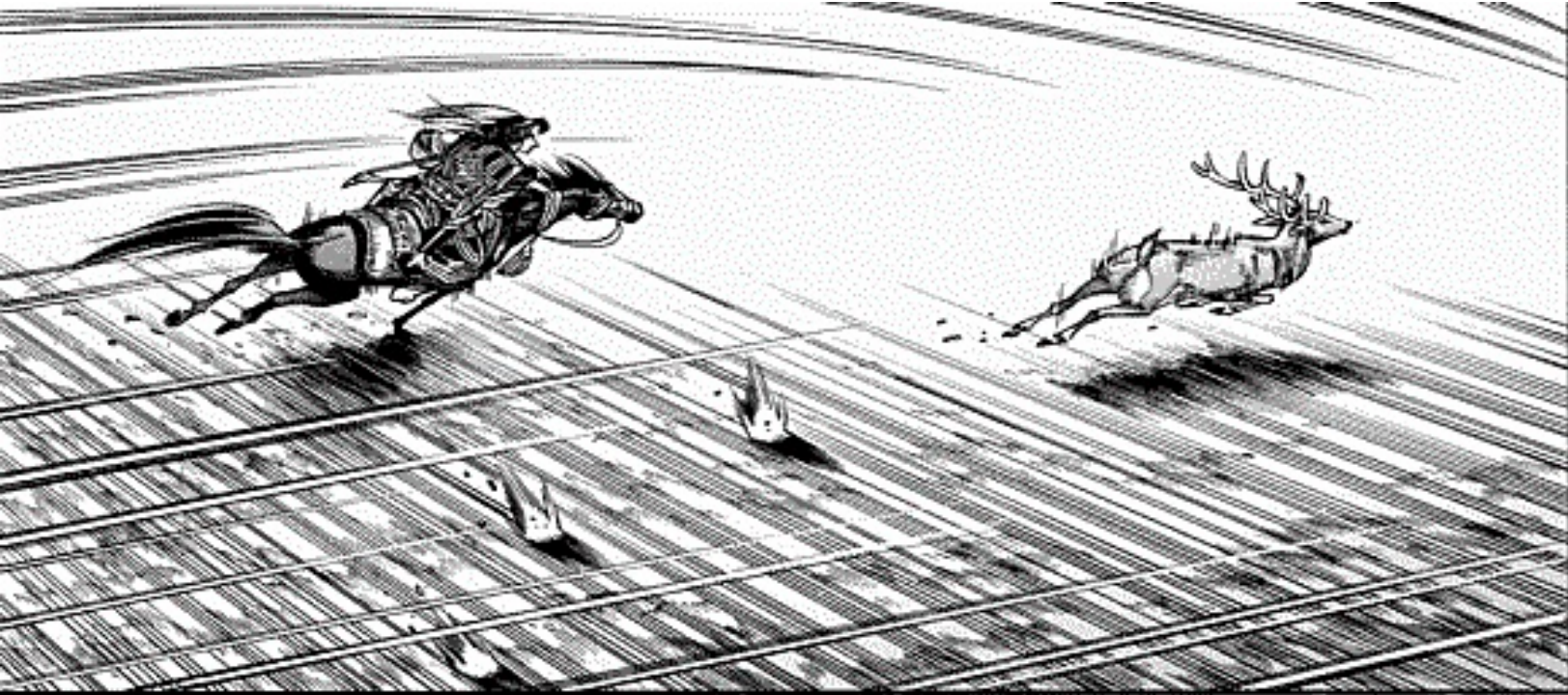
YOU
WANT TO
STAY HERE
AWHILE...

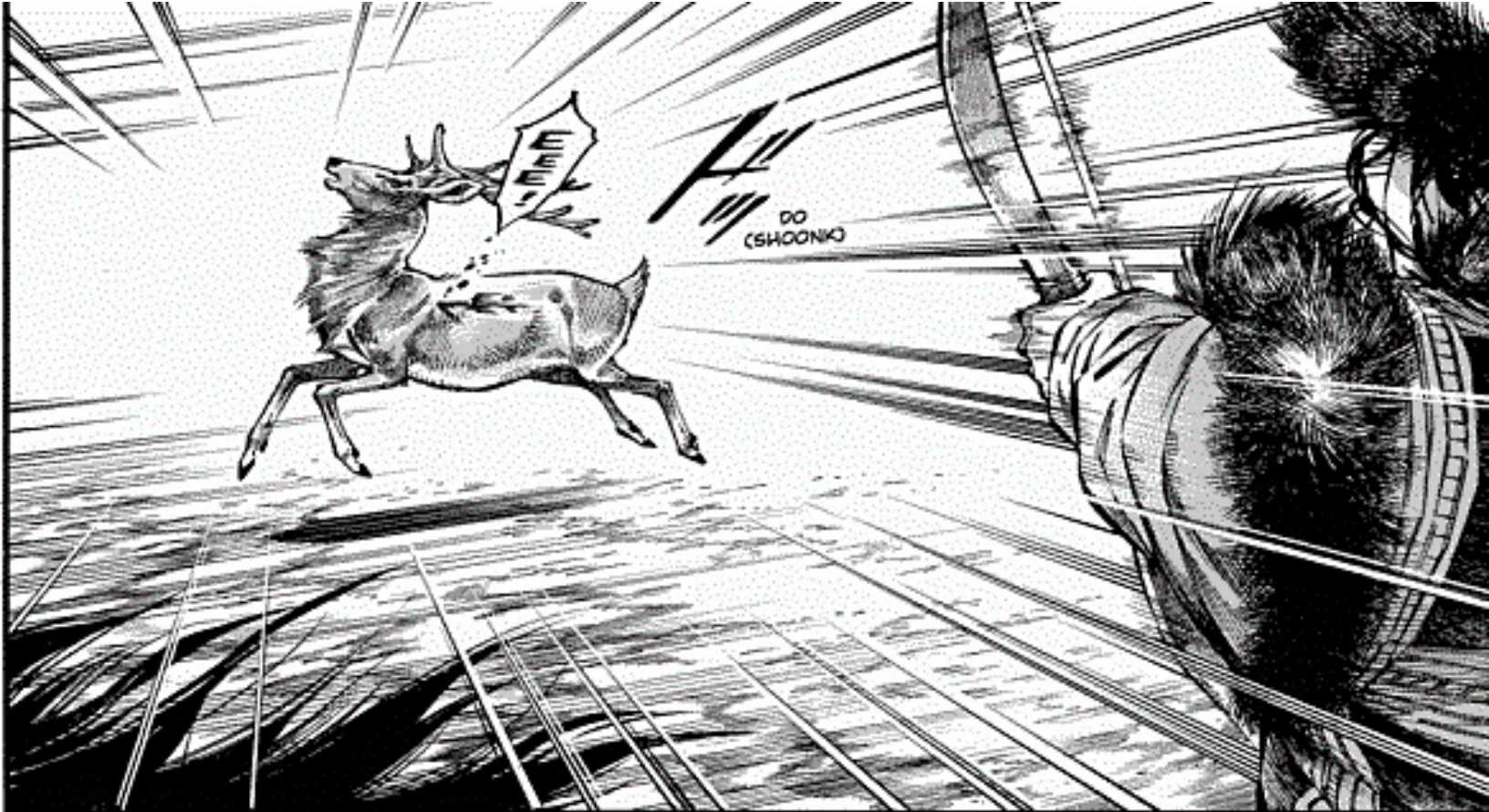


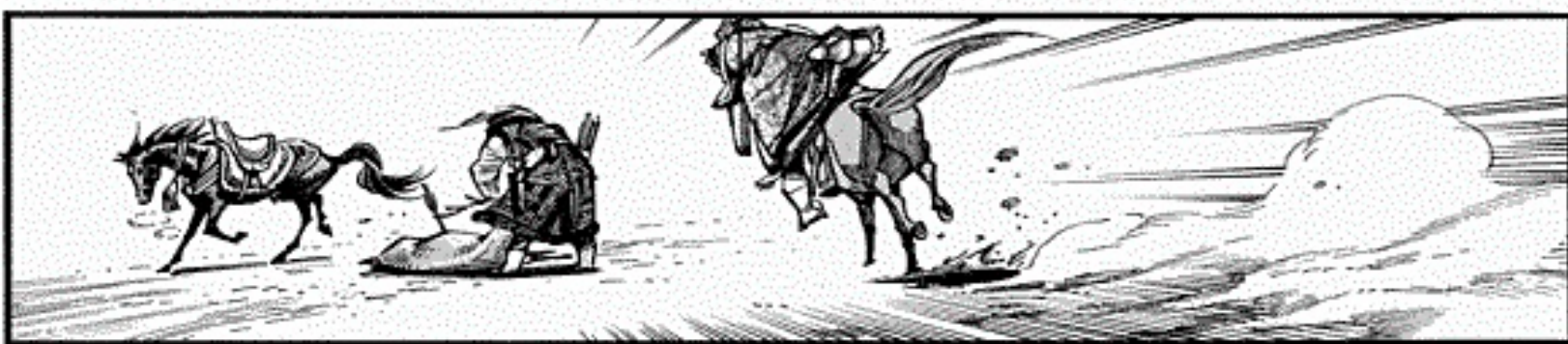
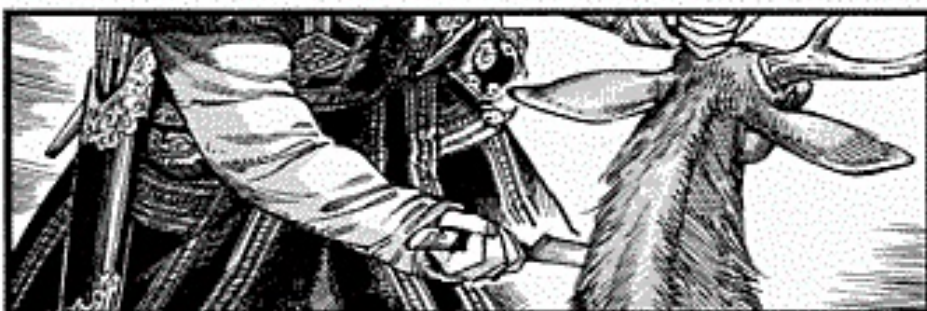


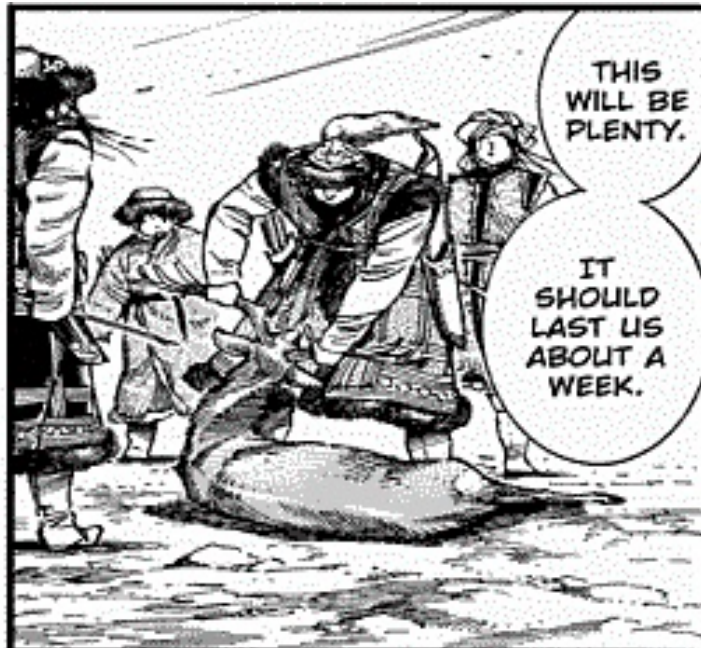
















I WANT
TO MAKE
MYSELF
STRONGER.



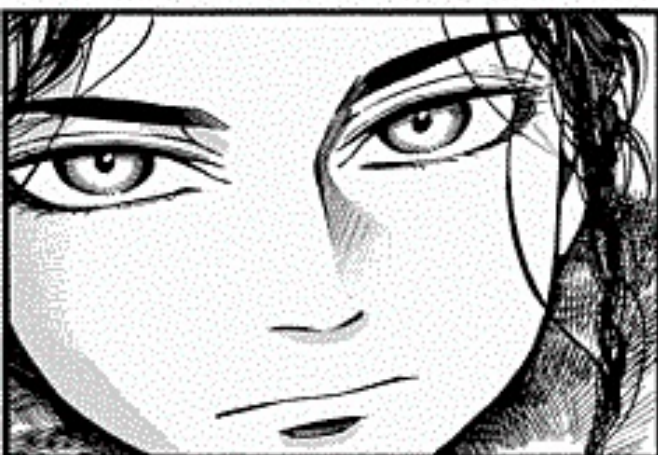
...THE
REASON I
WANT TO
LEARN THE
BOW ISN'T
REALLY
FOR
HUNTING...

NO...
THE...



...I DO
ACTUALLY
WANT TO
BECOME
A BETTER
HUNTER!

AH!
BUT...



SO I
NEED
TO DO
SOME-
THING...



IF I'M
ABLE TO
DO THIS,
THEN
MAYBE...

...I CAN
MAKE A
DIFFER-
ENCE...

...SOME-
HOW...



I
THINK
...

...IT'D BE
BETTER IF
I COULD
PROTECT
PEOPLE...



IF
SOMETHING
BAD
HAPPENS
AGAIN...

...I DON'T
WANT TO
BE THE
ONE WHO
CAN'T DO
ANYTHING...





WE WILL
GO OUT
HUNTING
EVERY
DAY FOR A
WHILE.



IT TAKES
TIME FOR
ONE TO
ACTUALLY
HIT THEIR
TARGET.



JA
(SKRAPE)



ALL
RIGHT.



SO EVEN
IF IT'S
JUST A
RABBIT...

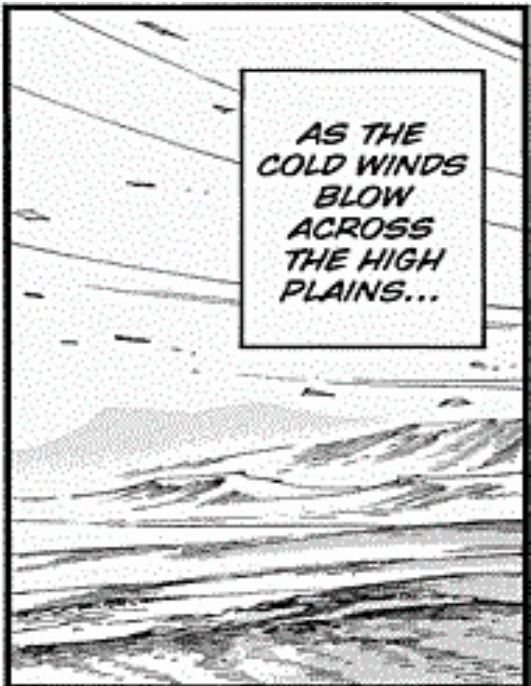
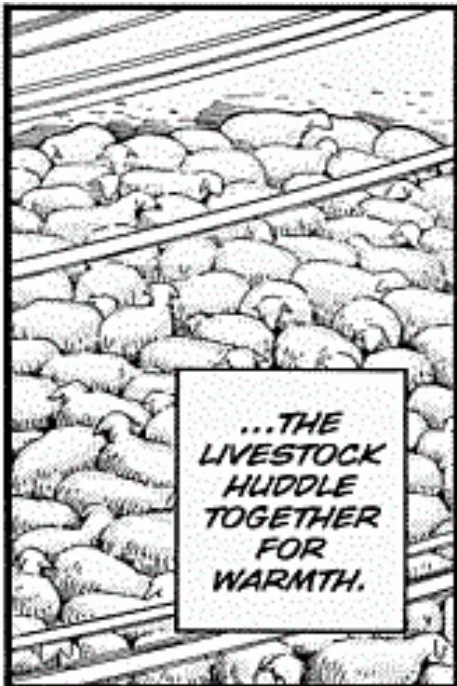


...WE'LL SEE
YOU ABLE TO
HIT A MOVING
TARGET,
BROTHER-IN-
LAW.









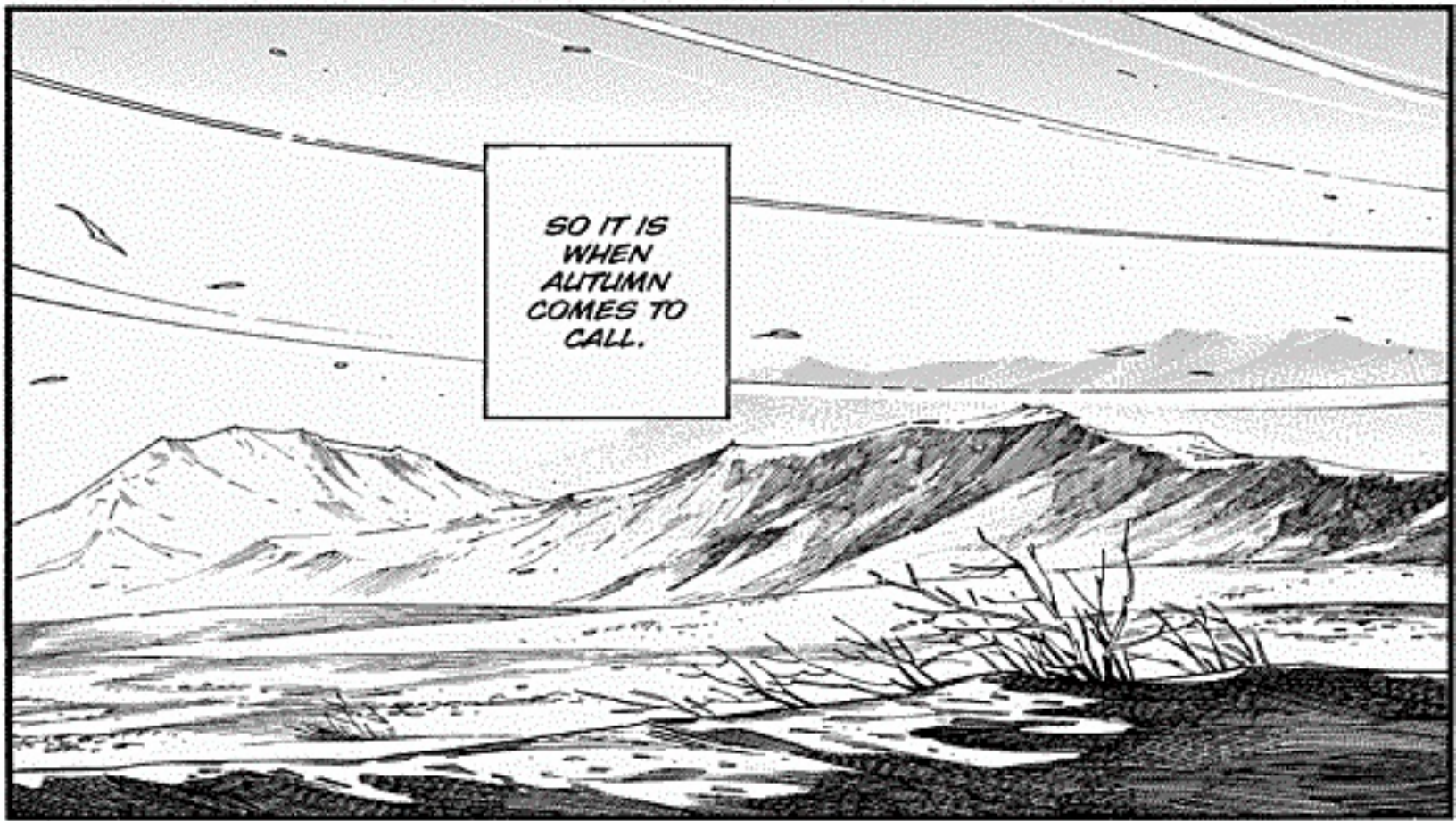
AS THE
COLD WINDS
BLOW
ACROSS
THE HIGH
PLAINS...

...THE
LIVESTOCK
HUDDLE
TOGETHER
FOR
WARMTH.



...IN
ADVANCE
OF THE
SEASON
THEY
KNOW IS
COMING.

THE PEOPLE
PRESERVE
FOOD AND
STOCKPILE
IT...



SO IT IS
WHEN
AUTUMN
COMES TO
CALL.

CHAPTER 63
GOLDEN EAGLE







CENTRAL
ASIA IN THE
NINETEENTH
CENTURY...

WHEN AUTUMN
VISITS THE
HIGH PLAINS,
PREPARATIONS
FOR WINTER
BEGIN.



CAN
YOU
HANDLE
IT?



.....
YES, I
CAN!

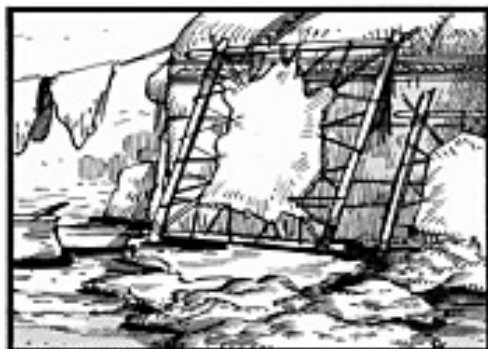






HEYYY!

IT'S
TIME
FOR
TEA!



KARLUK?



YES!



WHERE
YOU
GOING,
AZEL?

I'M
GOING
TO FEED
THE
EAGLES
...

...WHILE
THE MEAT
IS STILL
FRESH.

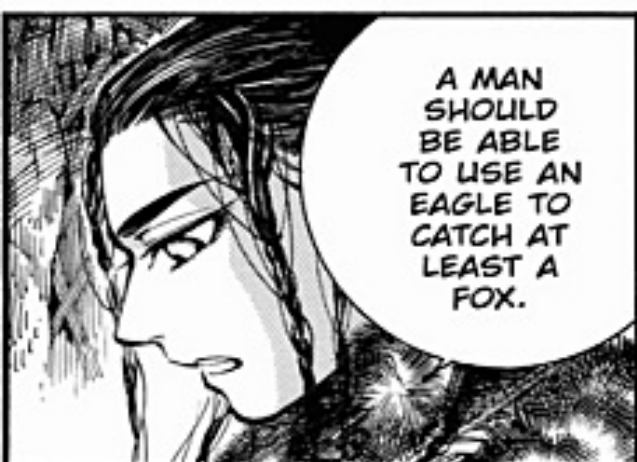










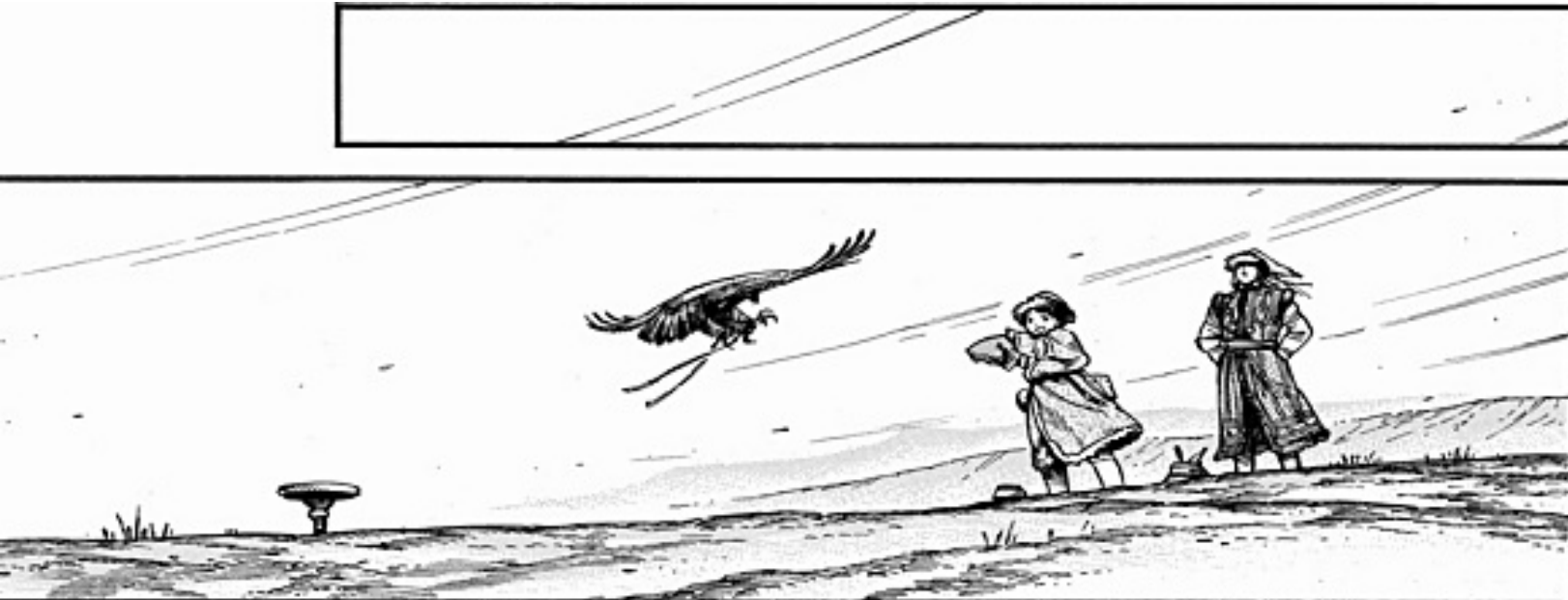
















KARLUK,
HAVE YOU
BEEN
WELL?

.....IT'S
BEEN A
LONG
TIME!



...CAN'T
BREATHE
...

AMIR...

I.....



BA
CWHOOSH



HELLO,
JORUK.

YOU
NEVER
CHANGE,
DO YOU,
AMIR?



YEAH.

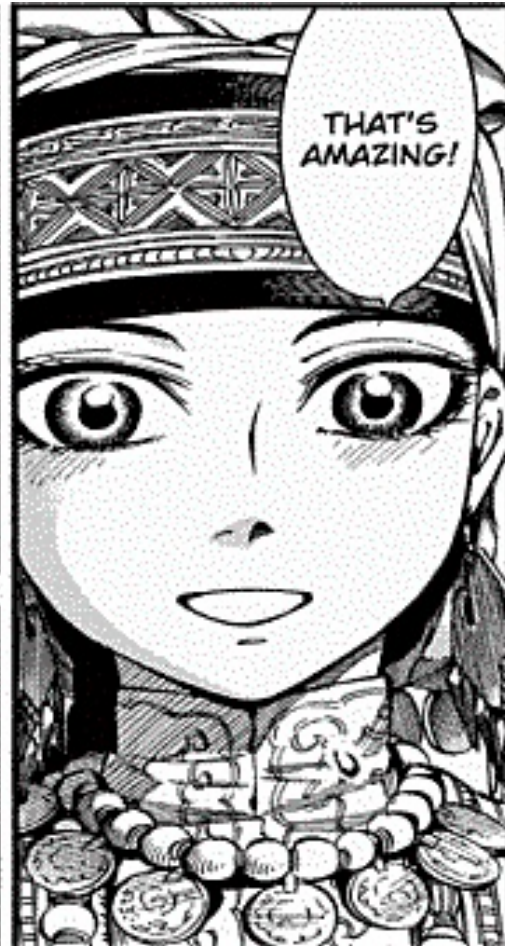


A WEEK
CAN BE
A LONG
TIME.

IT
HASN'T
BEEN
THAT
LONG.

WE
SEE EACH
OTHER
EVERY
WEEK,
RIGHT?







I'M HAPPY
WHEN YOU
COME.

AND I
ENJOY
OUR TIME
TOGETHER,
BUT...



HAVE I BEEN
BOTHERING
YOU...?

NO!
NOTHING
LIKE
THAT!



IF
ANYTHING
SERIOUS
COMES UP,
I'LL STILL
CONTACT YOU
IMMEDIATELY.

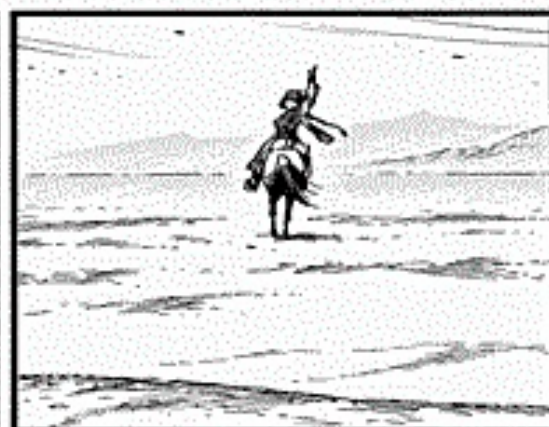


...JUST
FOR A
WHILE...

...I THINK WE
SHOULD GIVE
IT A TRY.









...BE
RIGHT.

YOU
COULD
...

.....



...TO SHOW
HER HOW
MUCH
YOU HAVE
GROWN,
CORRECT?

RATHER
THAN
MEETING
REGULARLY,
YOU'D LIKE
TO LEAVE
SOME
TIME BE-
TWEEN...



AM I
WRONG?



...WILL
COME
TO BE
HAPPY...

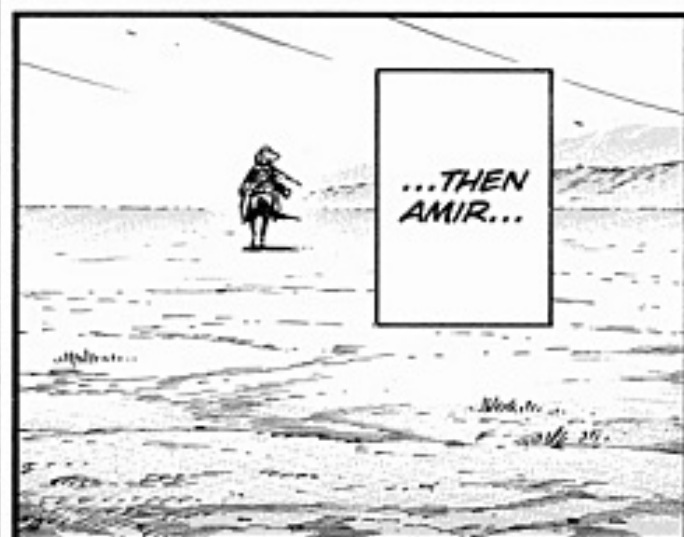
...EVEN
MORE
THAN
NOW...

...THAT
SHE
MARRIED
ME.

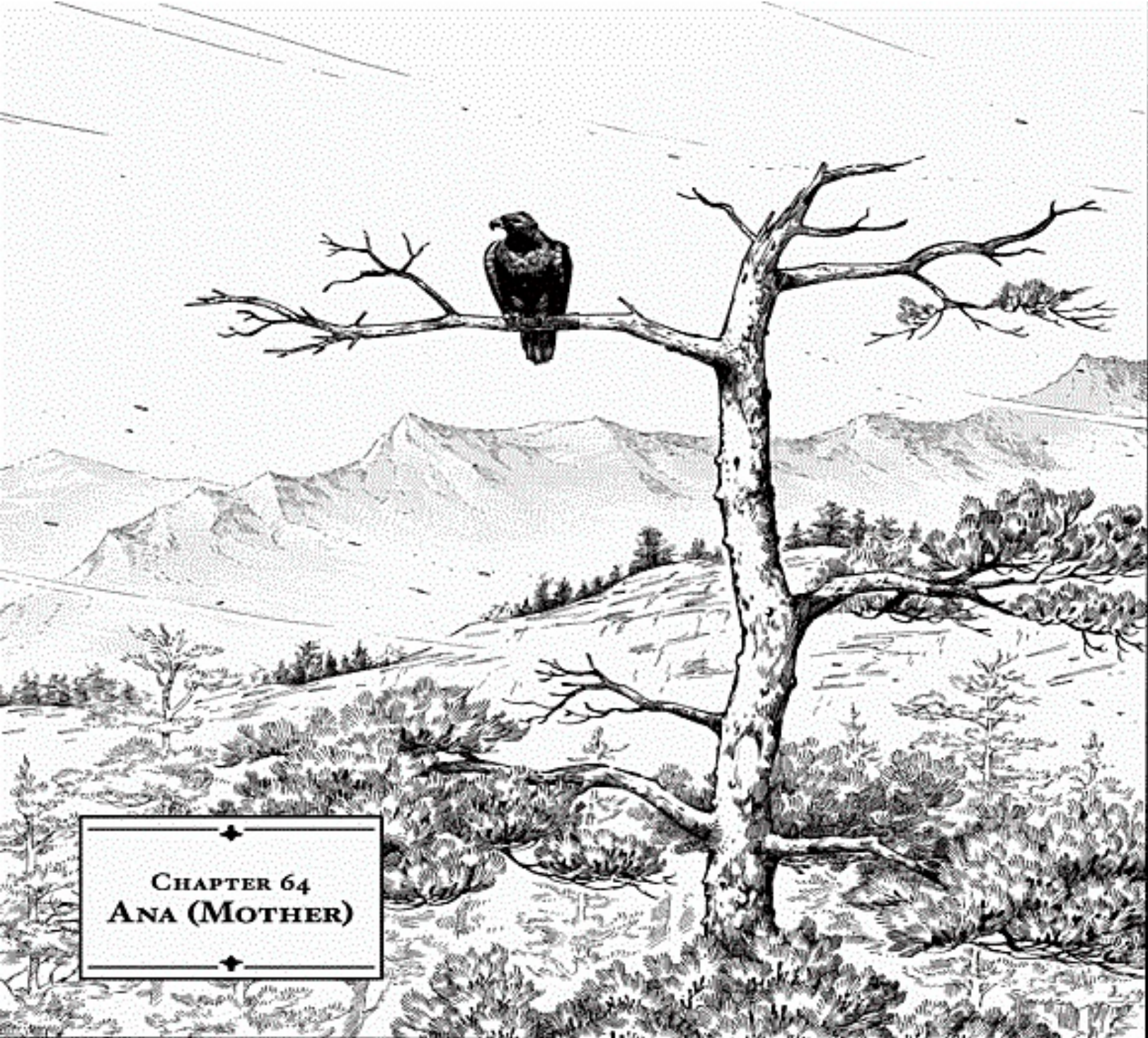


I
MEAN...

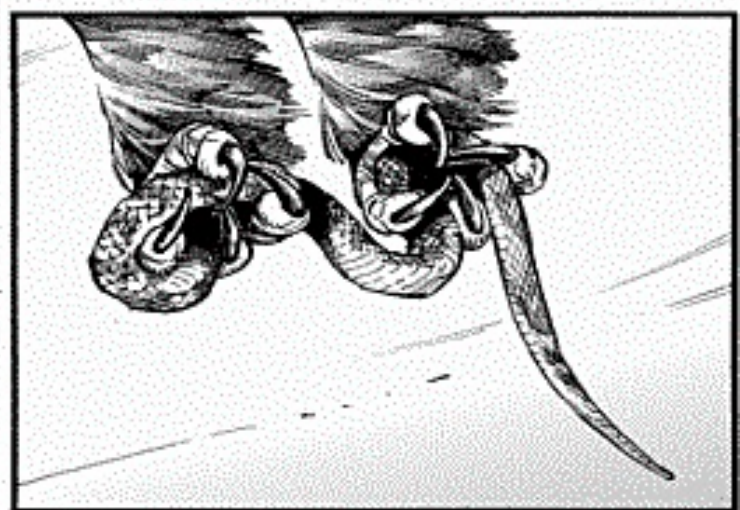
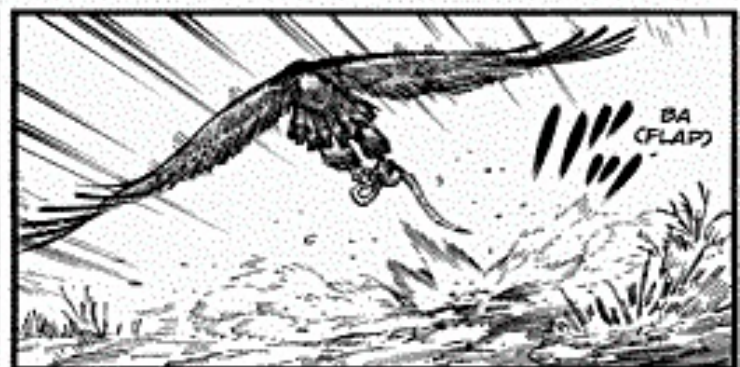
...IF I
DO...

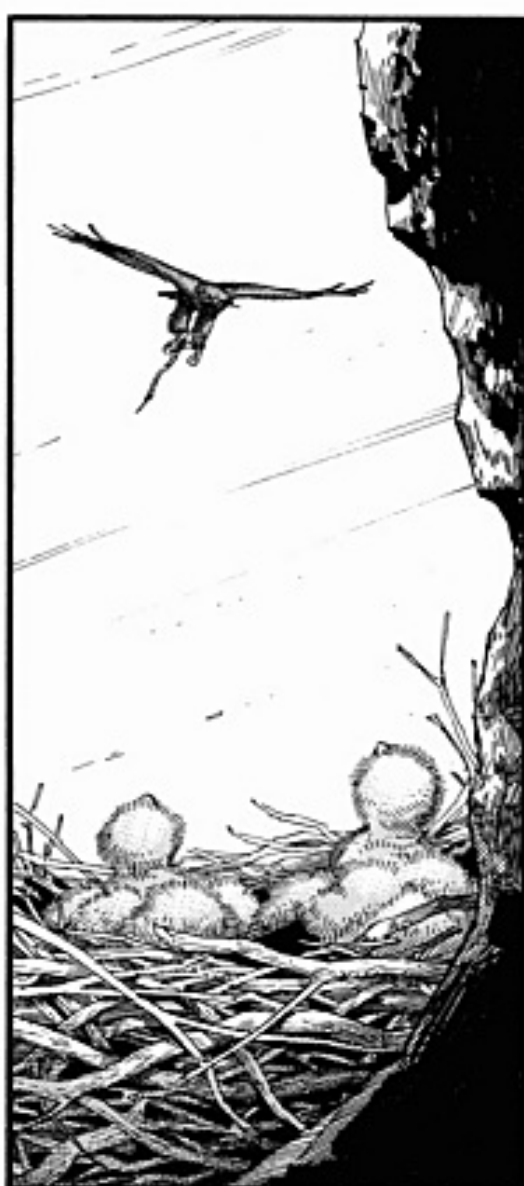


...THEN
AMIR...





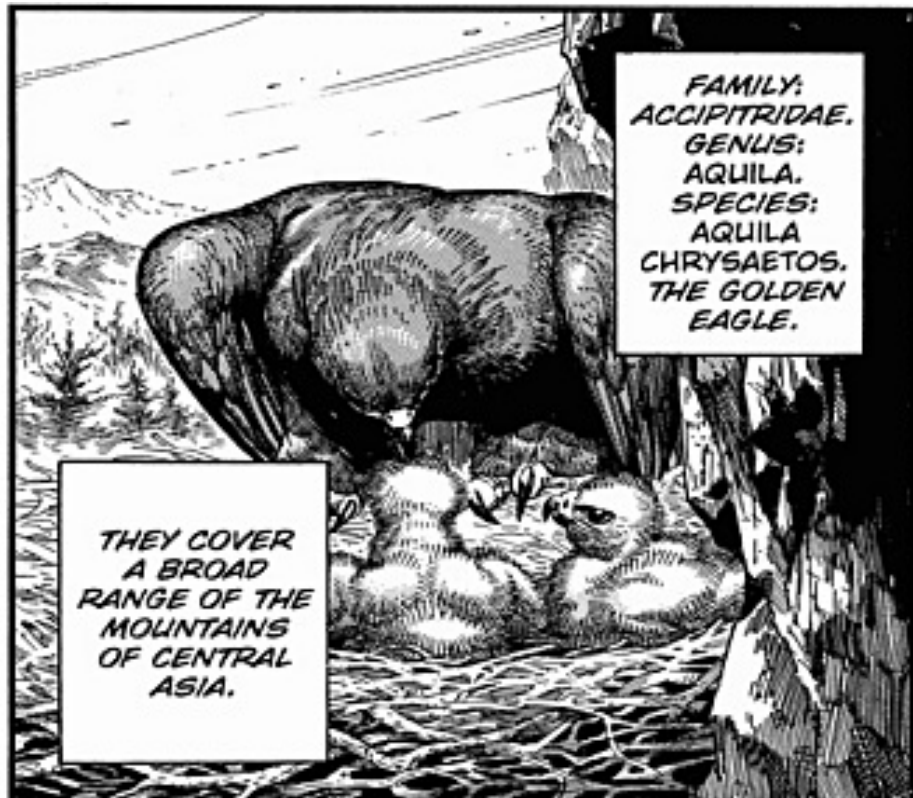






...KNOWN
FOR BEING
EXCELLENT
HUNTERS
OF GROUND
PREY.

THEY ARE
LARGE
RAPTORS...



FAMILY:
ACCIPITRIDAE.
GENUS:
AQUILA.
SPECIES:
AQUILA
CHRYSAETOS.
THE GOLDEN
EAGLE.

THEY COVER
A BROAD
RANGE OF THE
MOUNTAINS
OF CENTRAL
ASIA.



...THE FULLY
GROWN
BIRDS ARE
RETURNED
TO THE
WILD...

AFTER
FOUR
OR FIVE
YEARS OF
HUNTING...

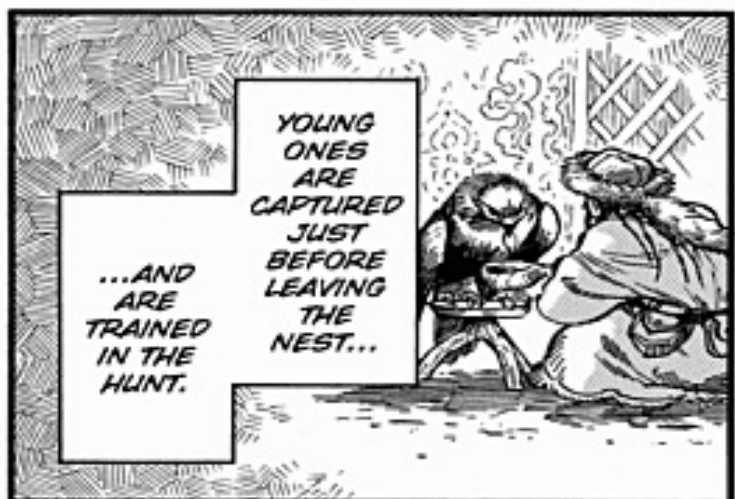


IN
CENTRAL
ASIA...

...FEMALE
GOLDEN
EAGLES
ARE
WIDELY
USED.

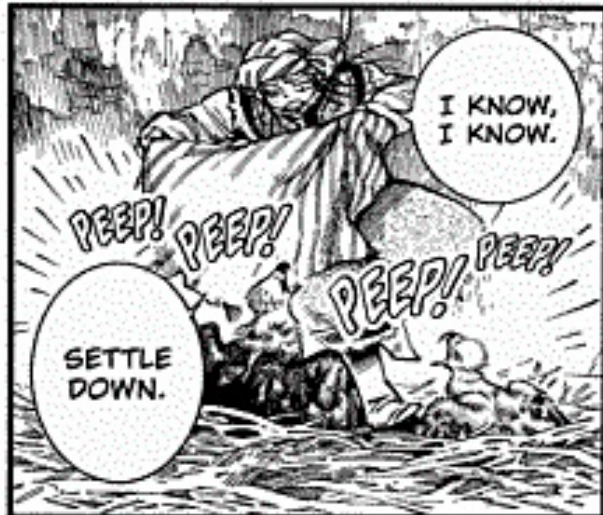


...AT WHICH
POINT,
A NEW
EAGLE IS
CAPTURED.



YOUNG
ONES
ARE
CAPTURED
JUST
BEFORE
LEAVING
THE
NEST...

...AND
ARE
TRAINED
IN THE
HUNT.





IT IS
VERY
STRONG.

I
EXPECT
IT WILL
BECOME A
FINE
EAGLE.



JUST
TAKE A
LOOK,
BAIMAT.



HOW WAS
IT? DID YOU
GET ONE?



WE'LL
BE IN
TROUBLE
IF ITS
PARENTS
SEE US.

LET'S
GO
HOME.

RIGHT!



IT IS A
FEMALE,
RIGHT?

I CHOSE
THE LARGER
OF THE
TWO. SO IT
PROBABLY
IS.



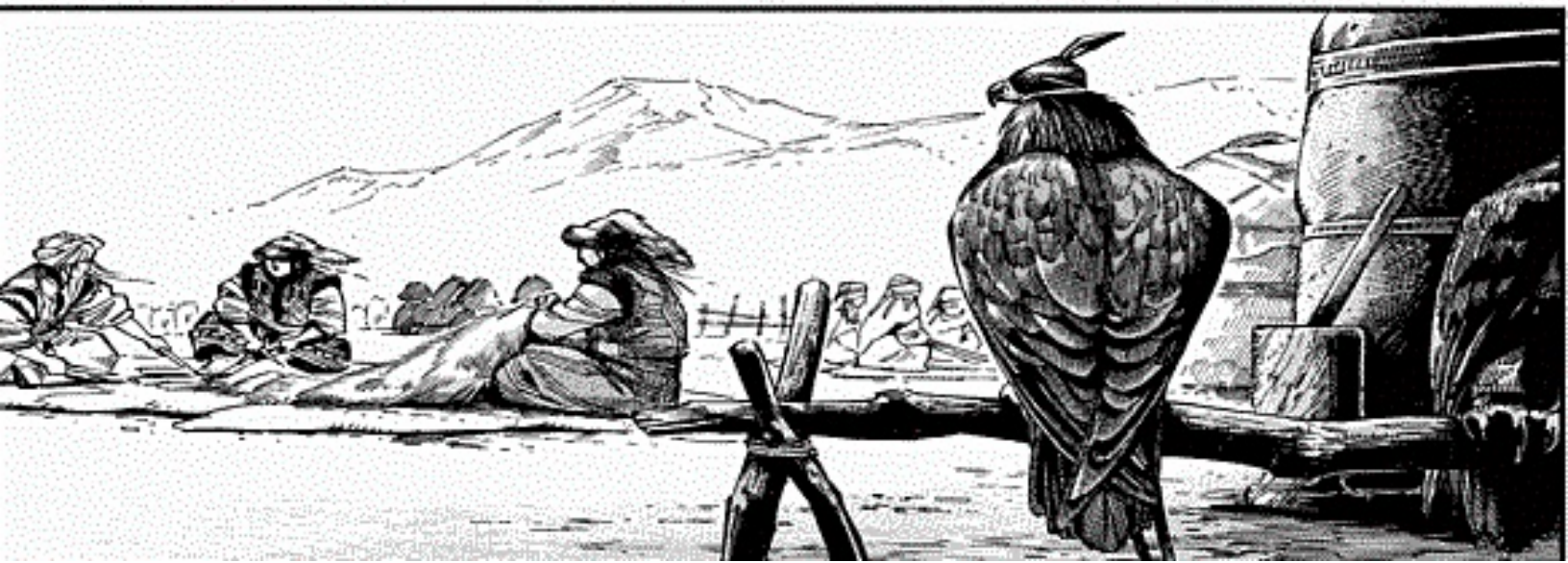
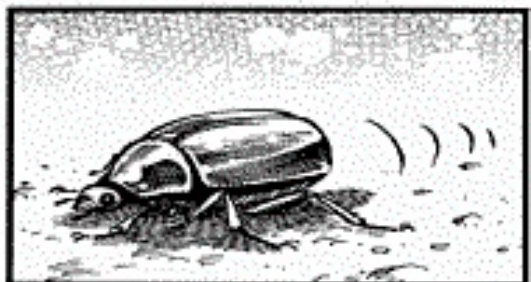
THEN THE
TRAINING
FOR ACTUAL
HUNTING
TAKES
ANOTHER
MONTH.

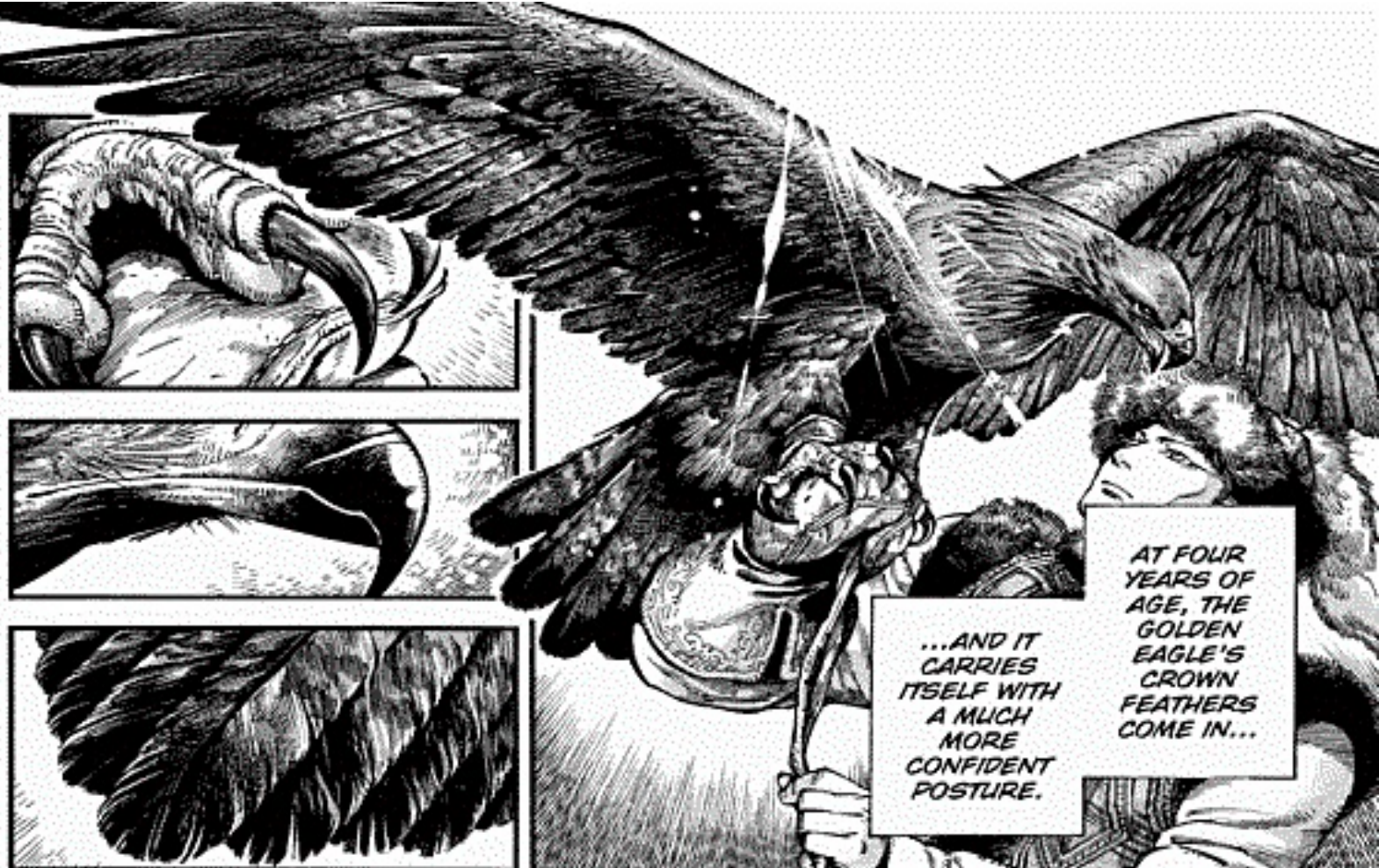


THE
TRAINING
TAKES A
MONTH
AND A
HALF.

THE
GOLDEN
EAGLE IS
TRAINED
TO RETURN
TO THE
HUNTER'S
ARM.

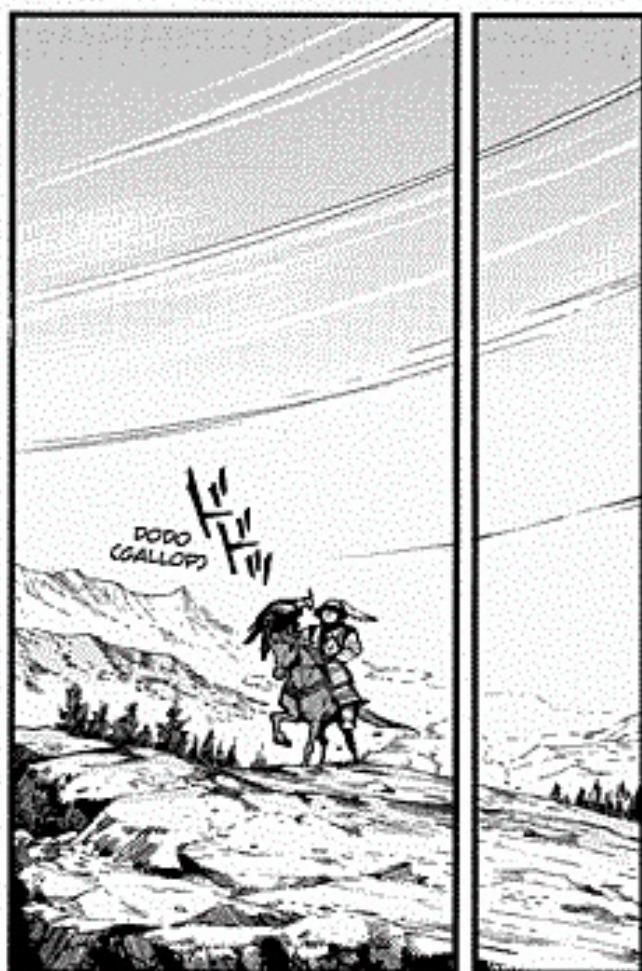






AT FOUR
YEARS OF
AGE, THE
GOLDEN
EAGLE'S
CROWN
FEATHERS
COME IN...

...AND IT
CARRIES
ITSELF WITH
A MUCH
MORE
CONFIDENT
POSTURE.



DODD
(GALLOP)



...AND ARE
READY TO
BREED.

THIS IS
ALSO WHEN
THEY REACH
SEXUAL
MATURITY...

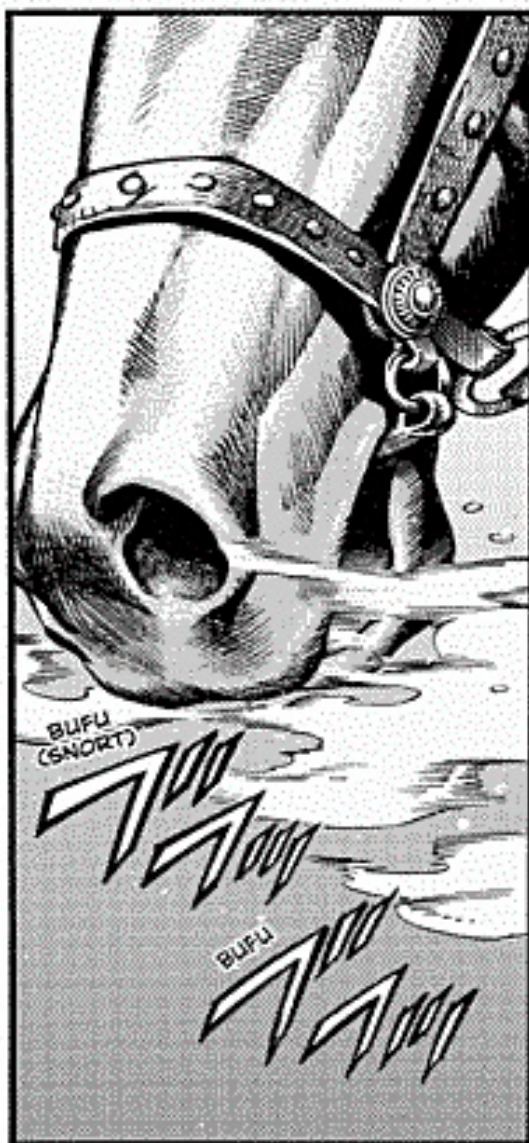
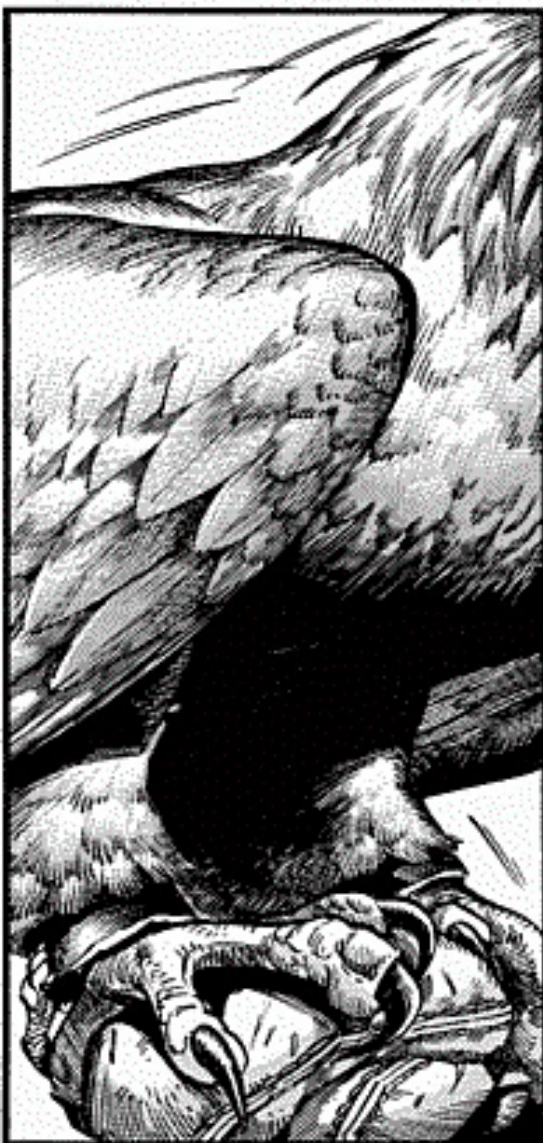
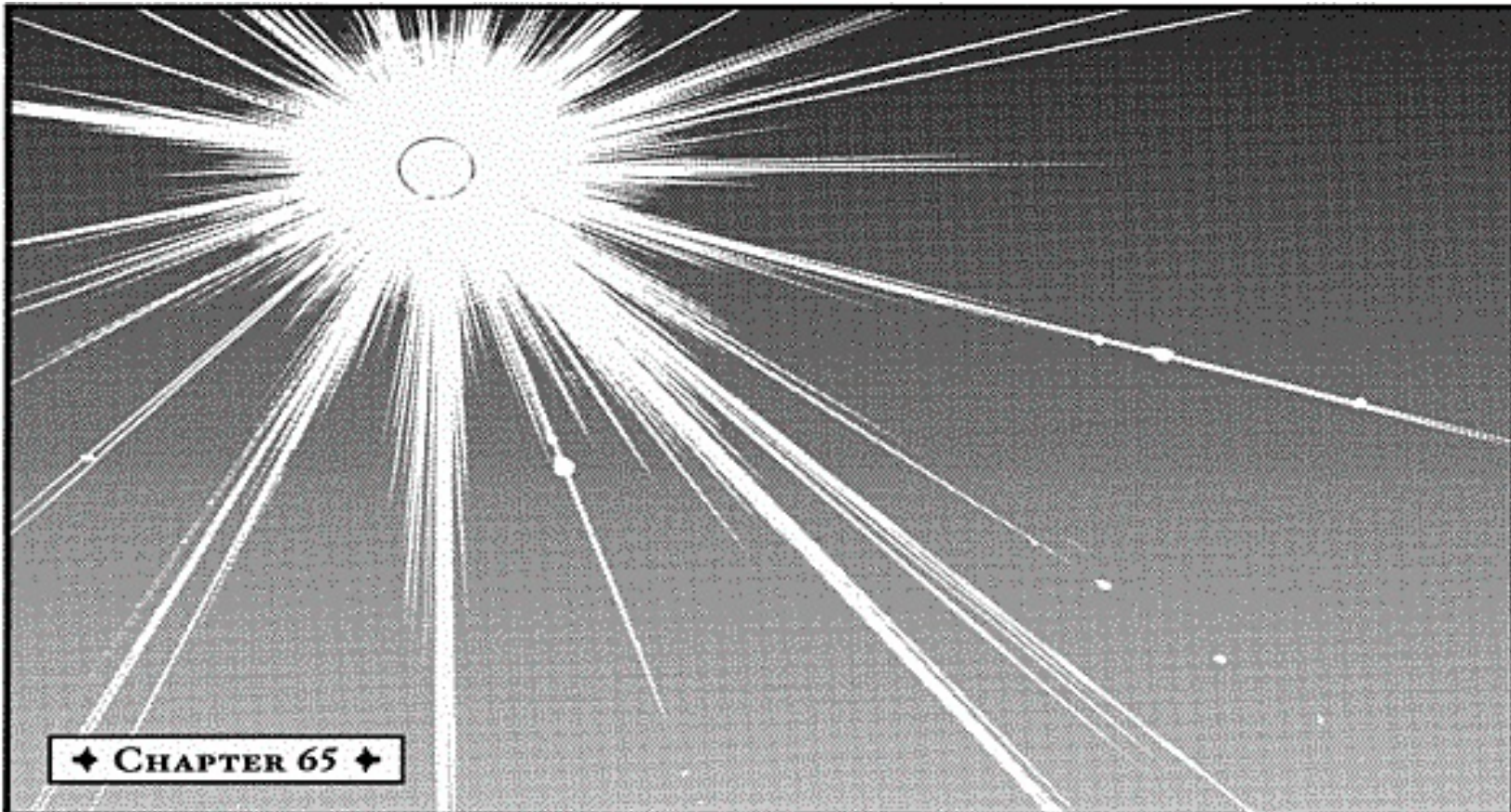




...ARE
RESPECT-
FULLY
NAMED
"ANA"—
"MOTHER"—
FROM
THEN ON.

THE
EAGLES
RETURNED
TO THE
WILD...

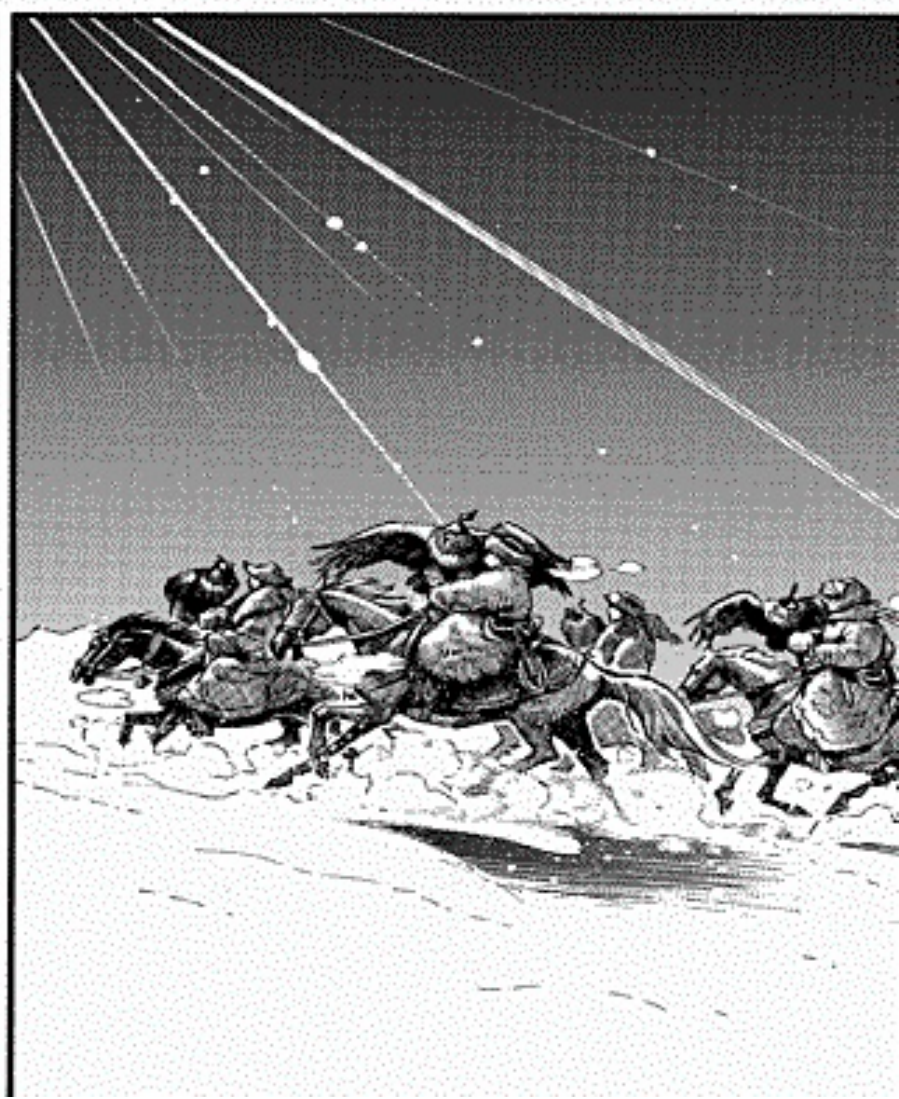


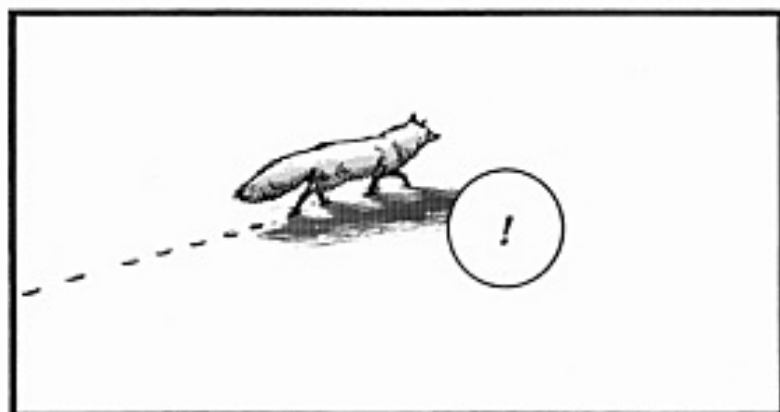






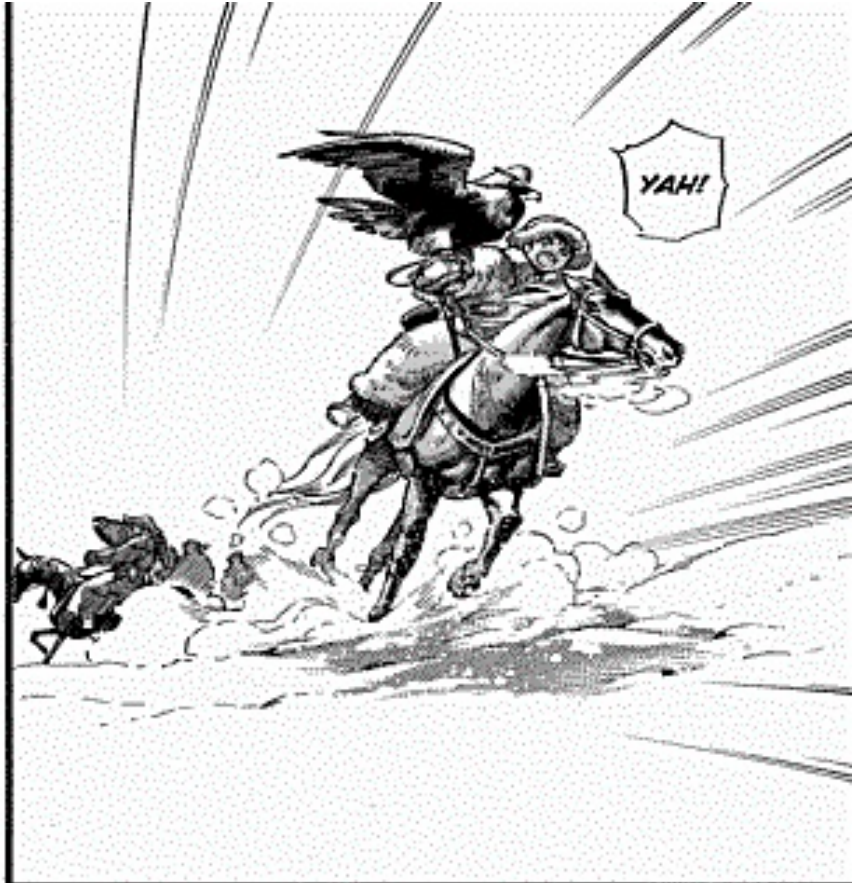
◆
CHAPTER 65
MOUNTED
FALCONRY
◆



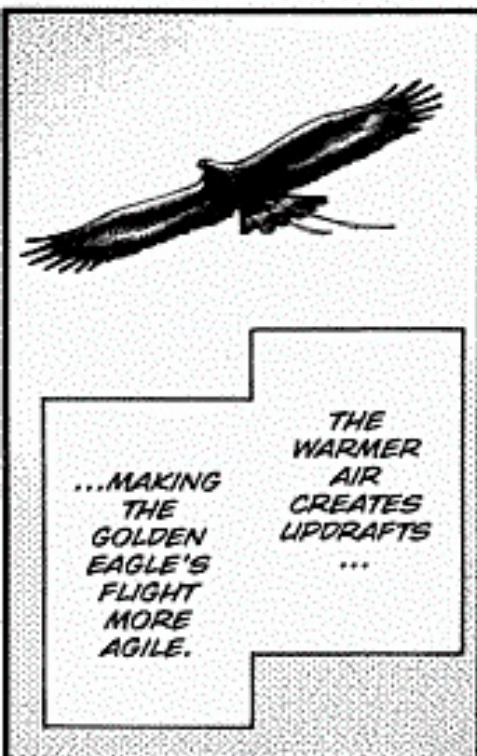




WINTER
IS THE
SEASON
FOR
FALCONRY.

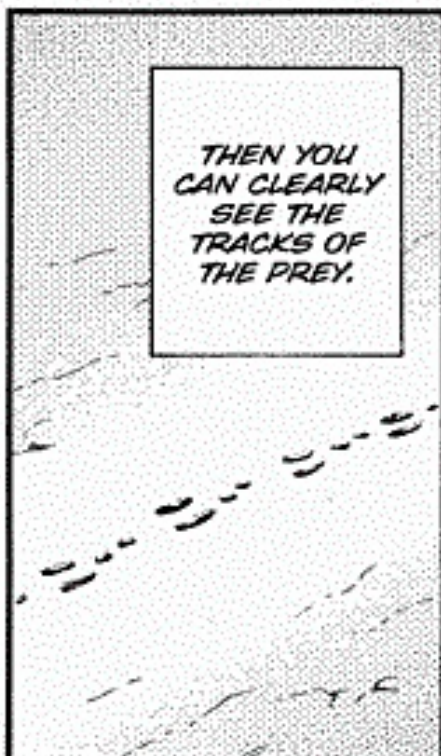


YAH!



...MAKING
THE
GOLDEN
EAGLE'S
FLIGHT
MORE
AGILE.

THE
WARMER
AIR
CREATES
UPDRAFTS
...



THEN YOU
CAN CLEARLY
SEE THE
TRACKS OF
THE PREY.



THE BEST
TIME TO
HUNT IS
DIRECTLY
AFTER A
SNOWFALL
...

...IDEALLY,
ON A
SUNNY
DAY.

...MAKING
CLIMBING
MOUNTAINS
ON FOOT
VERY
DIFFICULT.



A GOLDEN
EAGLE
WEIGHS
ABOUT
THIRTEEN
POUNDS...



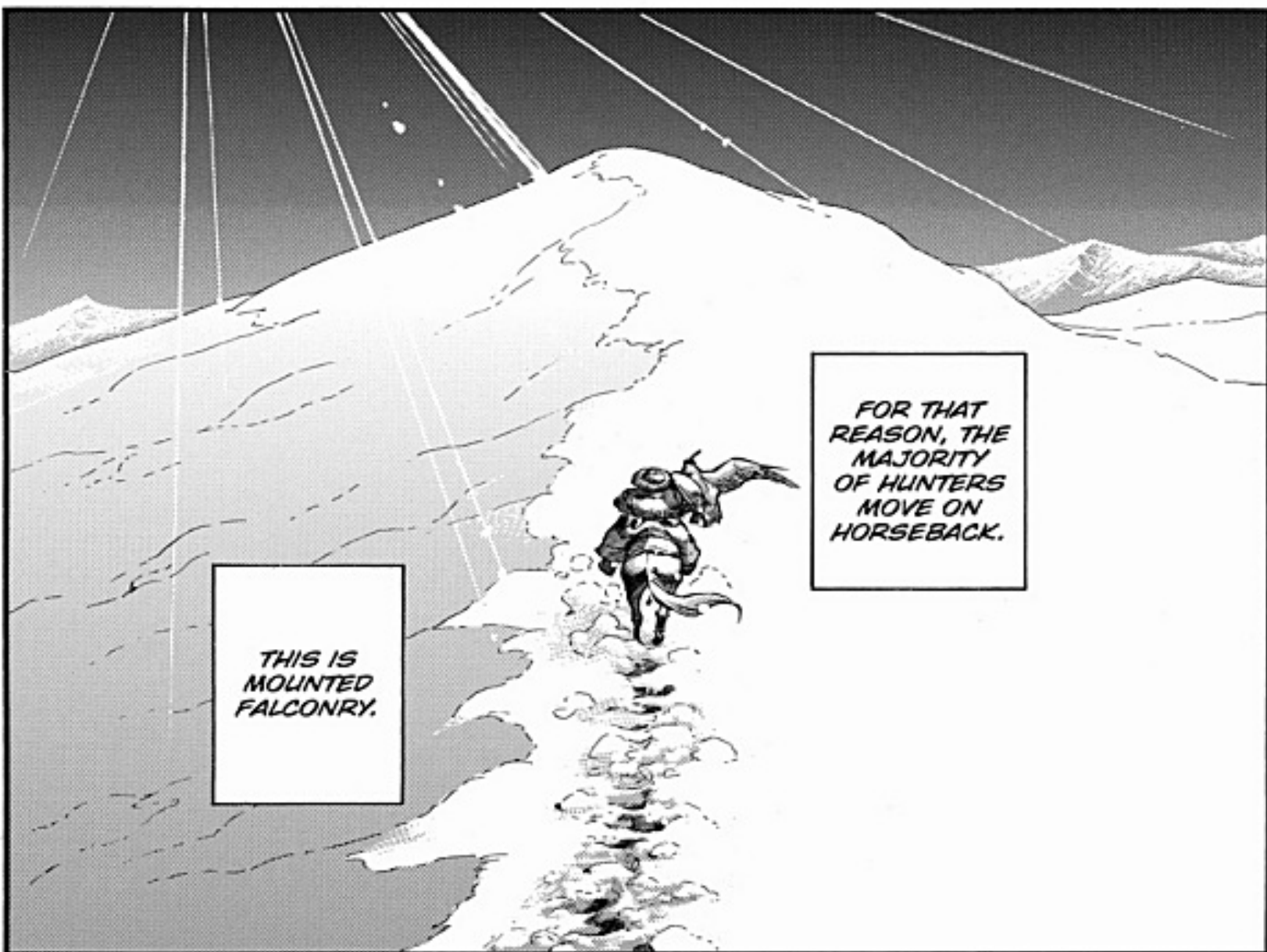
...THE
HUNTER
CLIMBS TO
HIGHER
GROUND
WITH BETTER
LINES OF
SIGHT.

WHEN
PREY IS
SPOTTED...

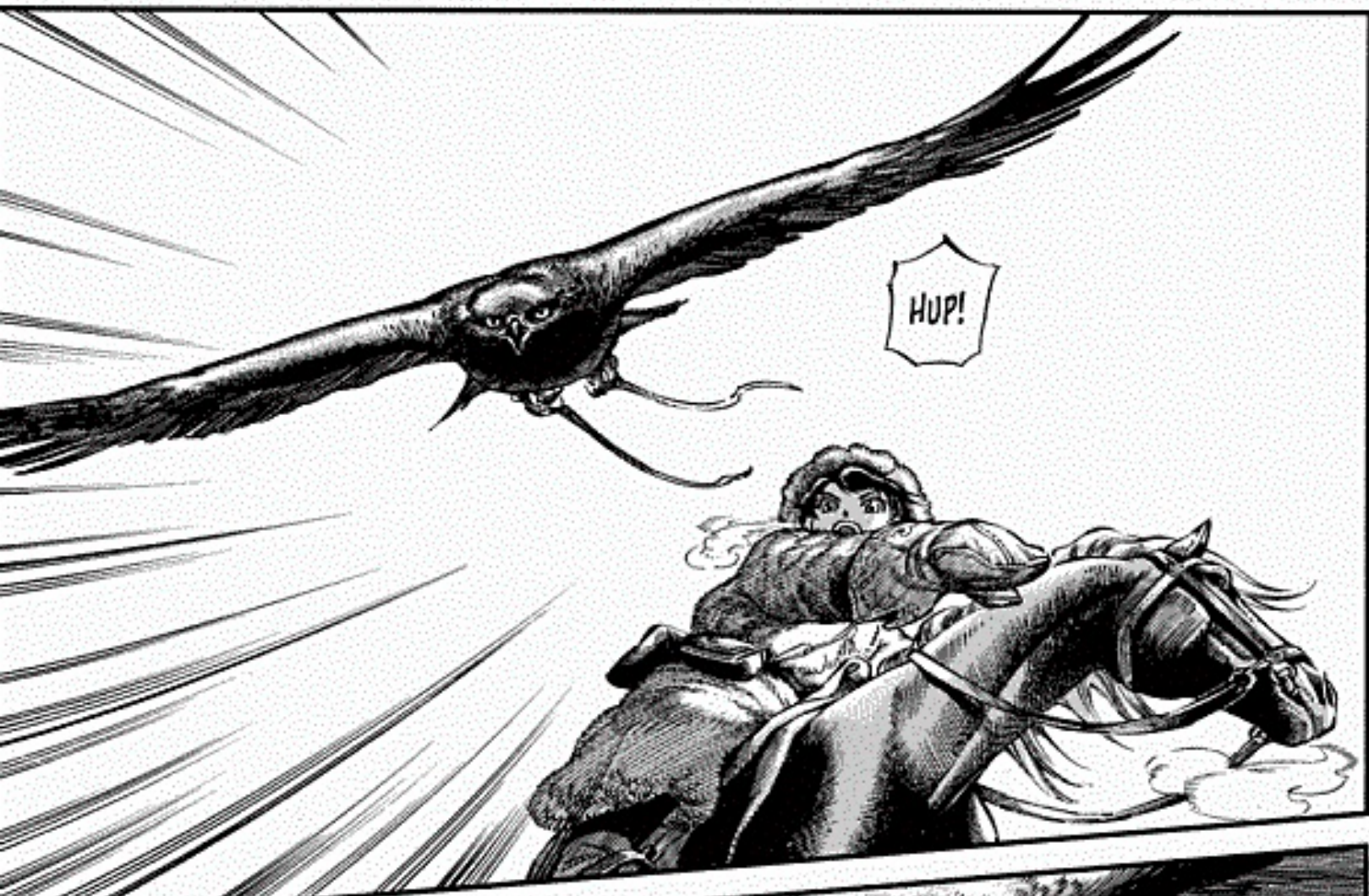
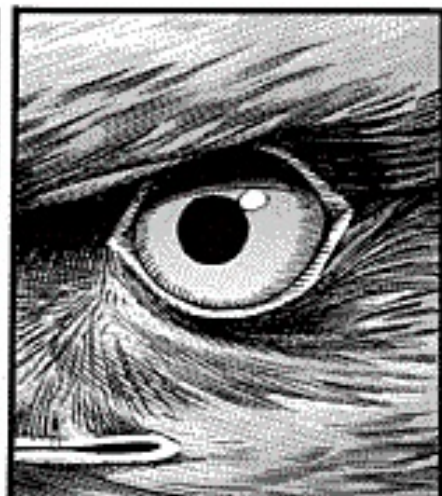


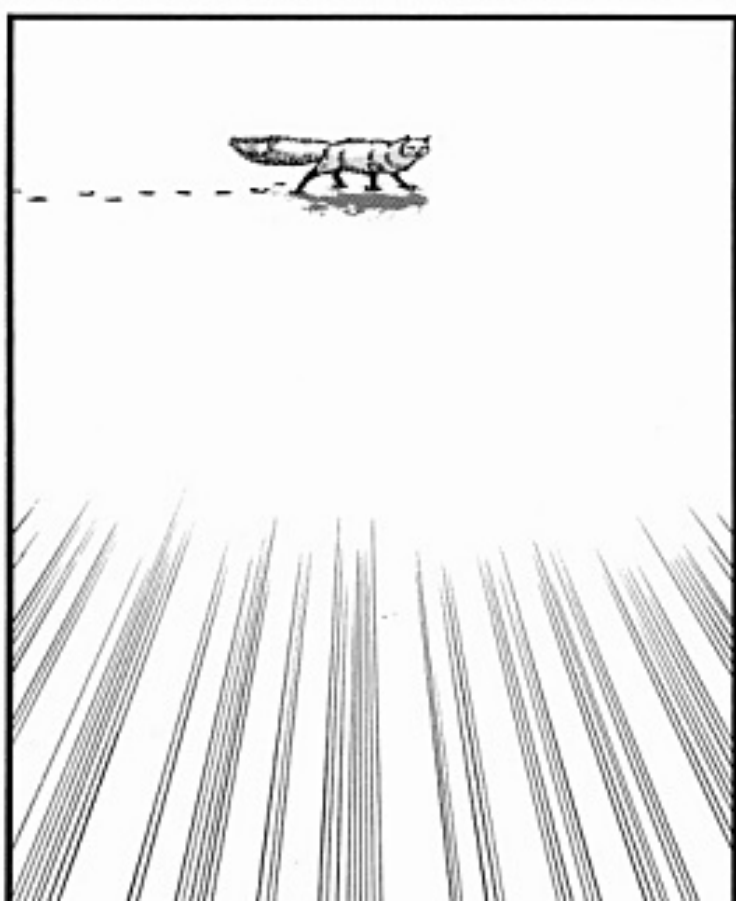
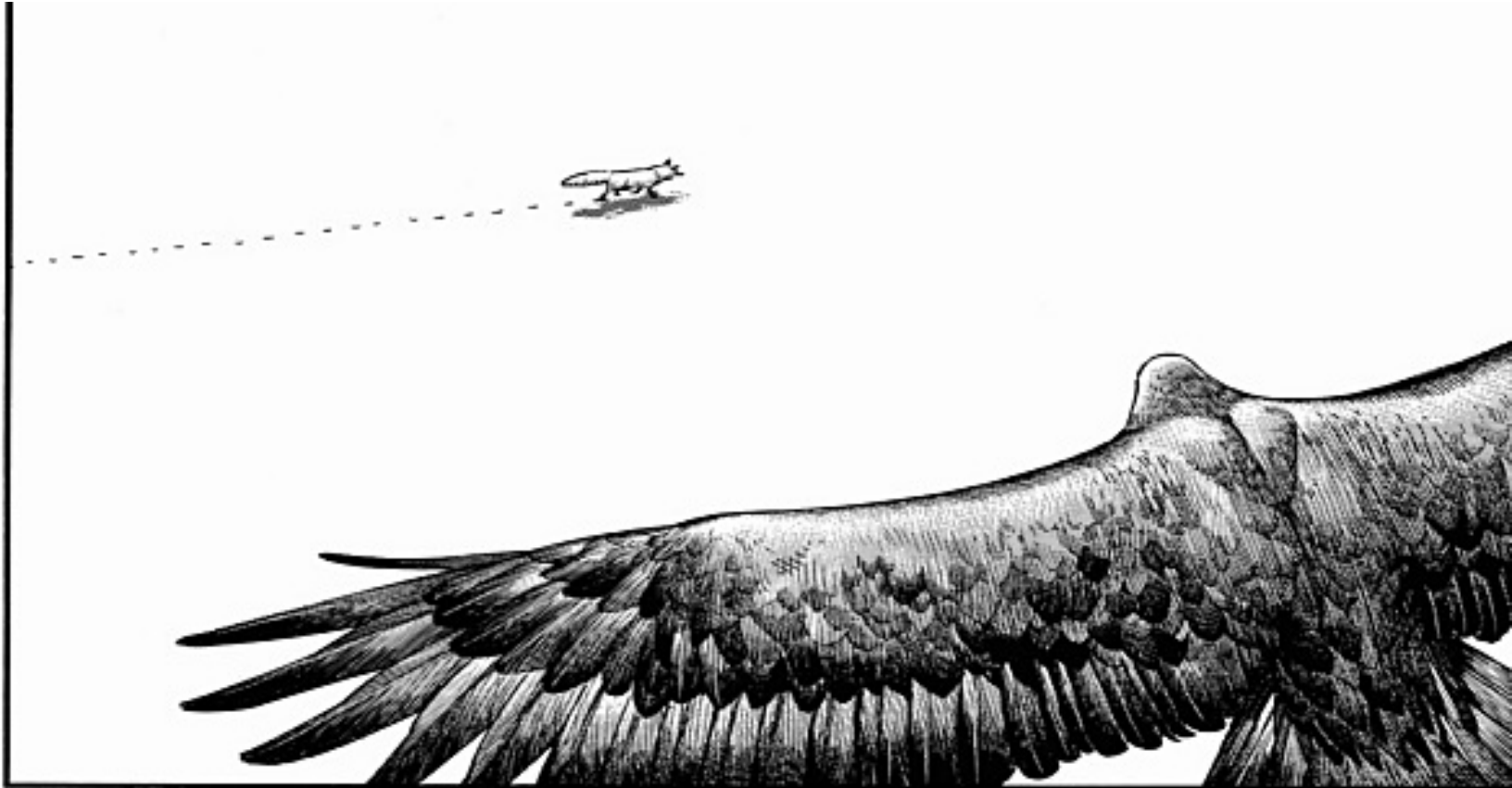
FOR THAT
REASON, THE
MAJORITY
OF HUNTERS
MOVE ON
HORSEBACK.

THIS IS
MOUNTED
FALCONRY.

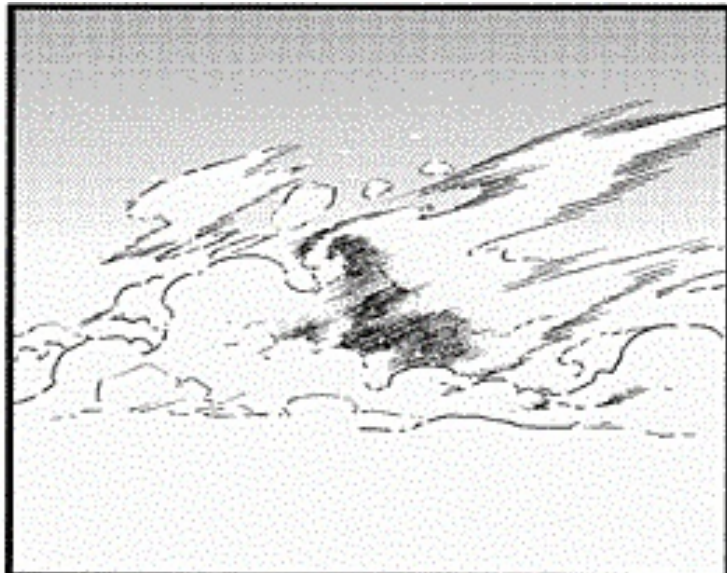
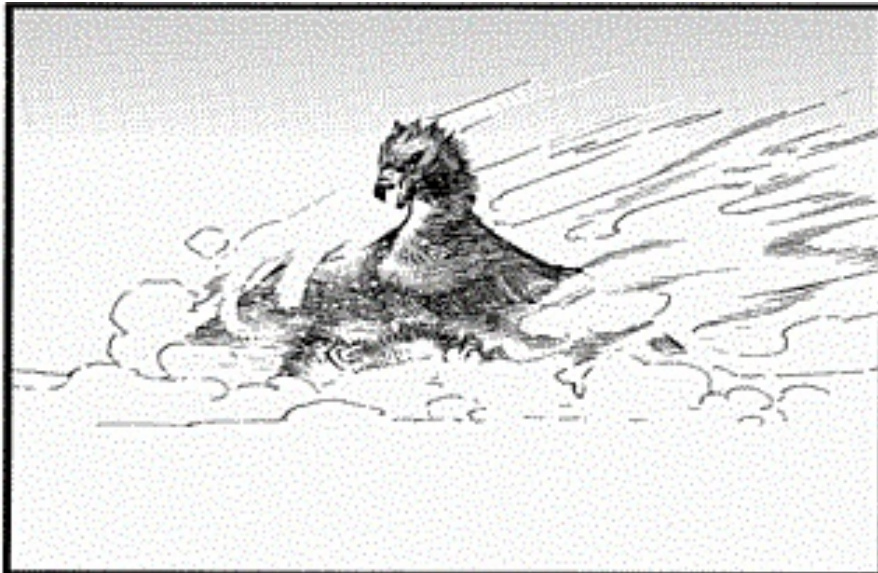


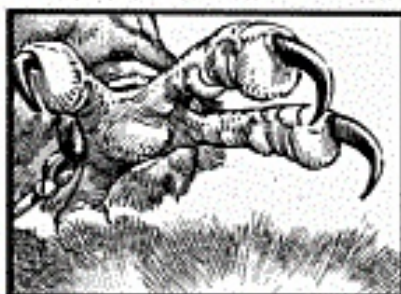






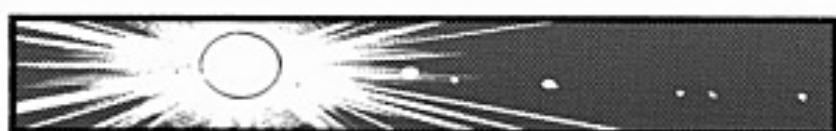






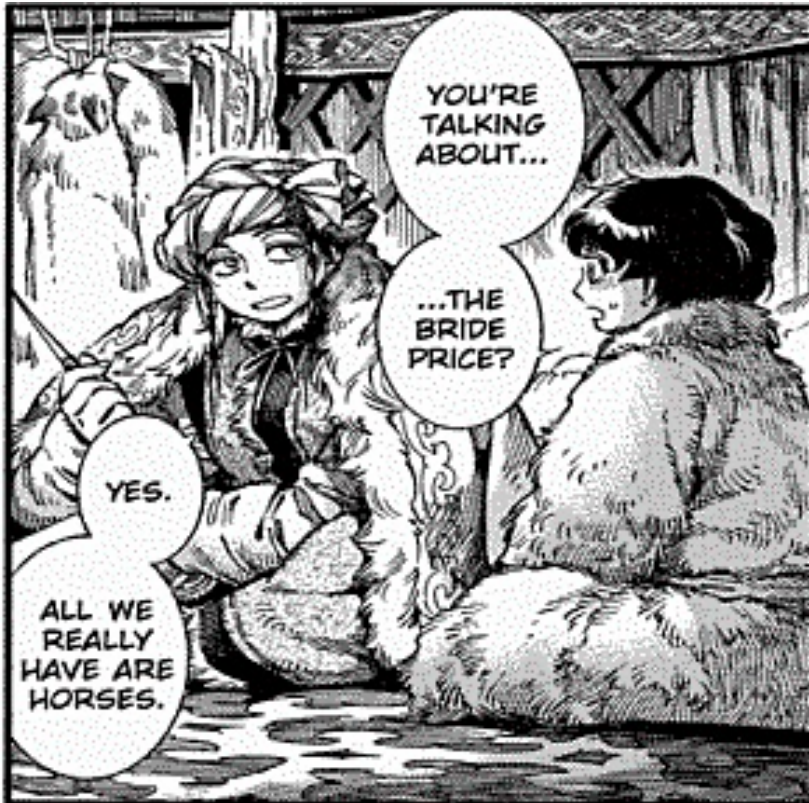












YOU'RE
TALKING
ABOUT...

...THE
BRIDE
PRICE?

YES.

ALL WE
REALLY
HAVE ARE
HORSES.



TO PUT
IT AS
SIMPLY AS
POSSIBLE
...

...WE JUST
DON'T
HAVE THE
MONEY.



NOW, IF
I HANDED
OVER THE
WHOLE OF
MY FAMILY'S
ASSETS,
IT'D BE
ENOUGH.

BUT
WHAT'S
THE GOOD
OF THAT,
SINCE,
AFTER, WE'D
ALL STARVE
TO DEATH?



WE TOOK
THE PELTS
OF A
HUNDRED
FOXES...



...AND
IT ISN'T
NEARLY
ENOUGH.



HUH?

BUT...

...DO YOU
REALLY
NEED THAT
MUCH?



IN
A TOWN,
YOU MAY
NOT NEED
MUCH.

BUT OUT
HERE, NO
BRIDE WILL
GIVE ME
A SECOND
LOOK.



HUH...?
LEADERS...?

YOU MEAN
AZEL AND
AMIR'S
FATHER?



BUT
WHAT IT
REALLY
COMES
DOWN
TO...

...IS THE
BAD LUCK
WE'VE HAD
WHEN IT
COMES TO
LEADERS.



BUT HE
WAS ALL
ABOUT
WANTING A
BRIDE FROM
A GOOD
FAMILY...

...OR
A BRIDE
WHO WOULD
BRING
THE BEST
DOWRY.



WHEN HE
HAD A BIT
OF INFLU-
ENCE...

...HE
PROBABLY
SHOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN SO
PICKY AND JUST
FOUND A BRIDE
FOR AT LEAST
AZEL.



AND
THIS
IS THE
WAY IT
TURNED
OUT.

WHILE HE
TOOK HIS
TIME, THAT
WHOLE FIASCO
HAPPENED.



.....



...IS WHY
ALL THE
TOWN
FOLK...

...ALWAYS
HAVE TO GET
MARRIED SO
EARLY.



BUT...

WELL...

WHAT I
ALWAYS
WONDER...



AND
GUYS FALL
FOR THEIR
WOMANLY
QUALITIES. AND
THEN, THEY
GET MARRIED,
RIGHT?

GIRLS FALL
FOR GUYS'
MANLY
QUALITIES.



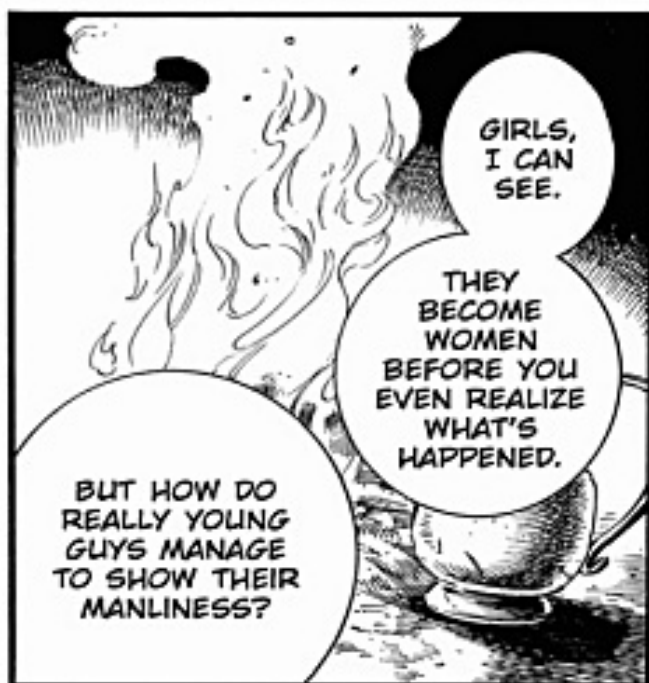
EH?



IT'S
JUST...



WELL,
IT'S
JUST...



GIRLS,
I CAN
SEE.

THEY
BECOME
WOMEN
BEFORE YOU
EVEN REALIZE
WHAT'S
HAPPENED.

BUT HOW DO
REALLY YOUNG
GUYS MANAGE
TO SHOW THEIR
MANLINESS?





...TO VISIT
A LITTLE
MORE OFTEN
THAN ONCE A
MONTH.

MAYBE
I'LL HAVE
TO ASK
HER...

FOR
WHAT-
EVER
REASON
...

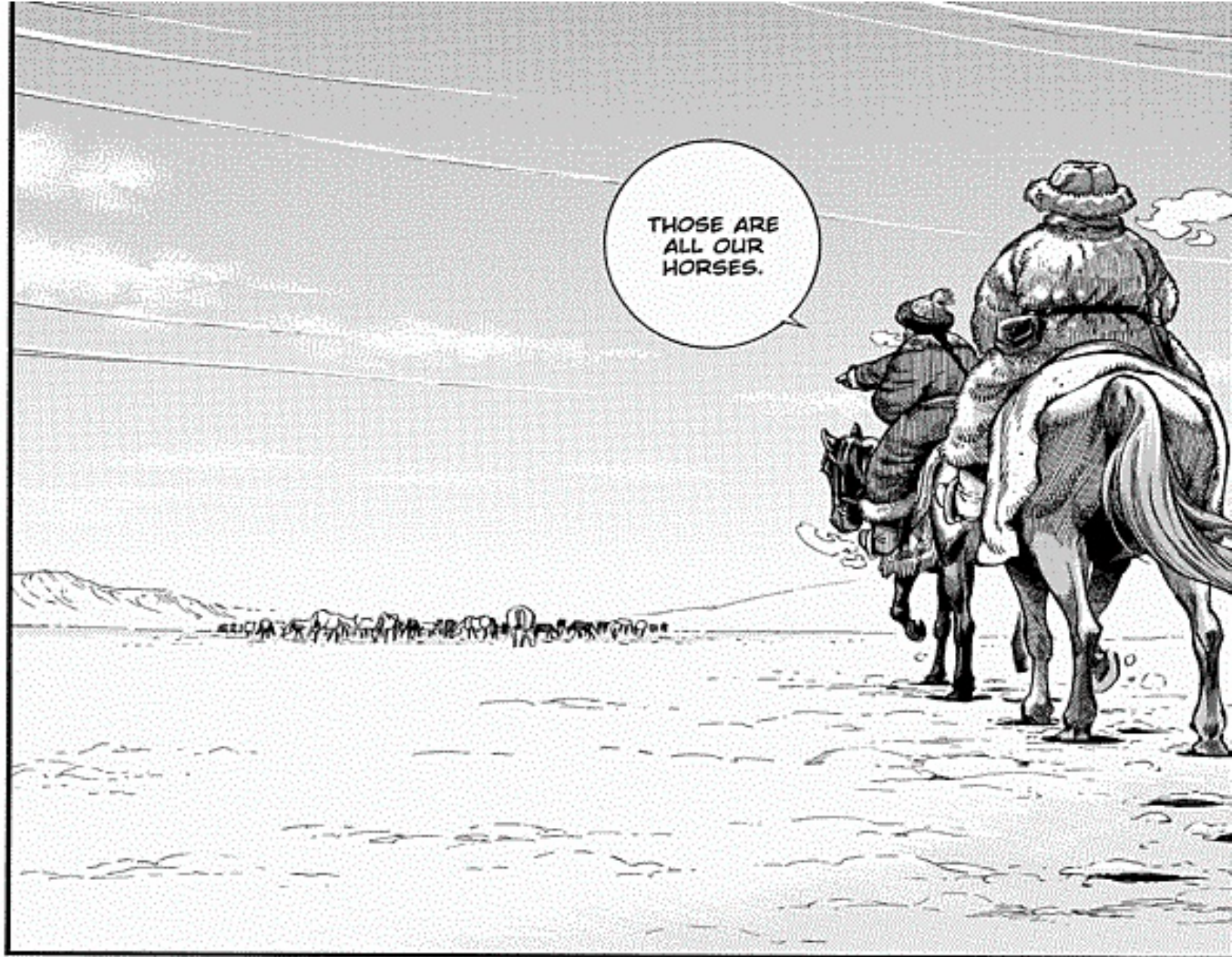
...I CAN'T
STOP
THINKING
ABOUT HOW
MUCH I
WANT TO
TALK TO
AMIR.



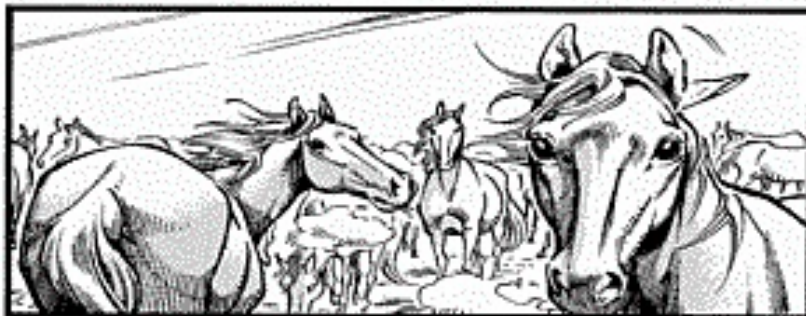
NEXT
TIME SHE
COMES...

...I'LL BE
SURE TO
ASK HER.



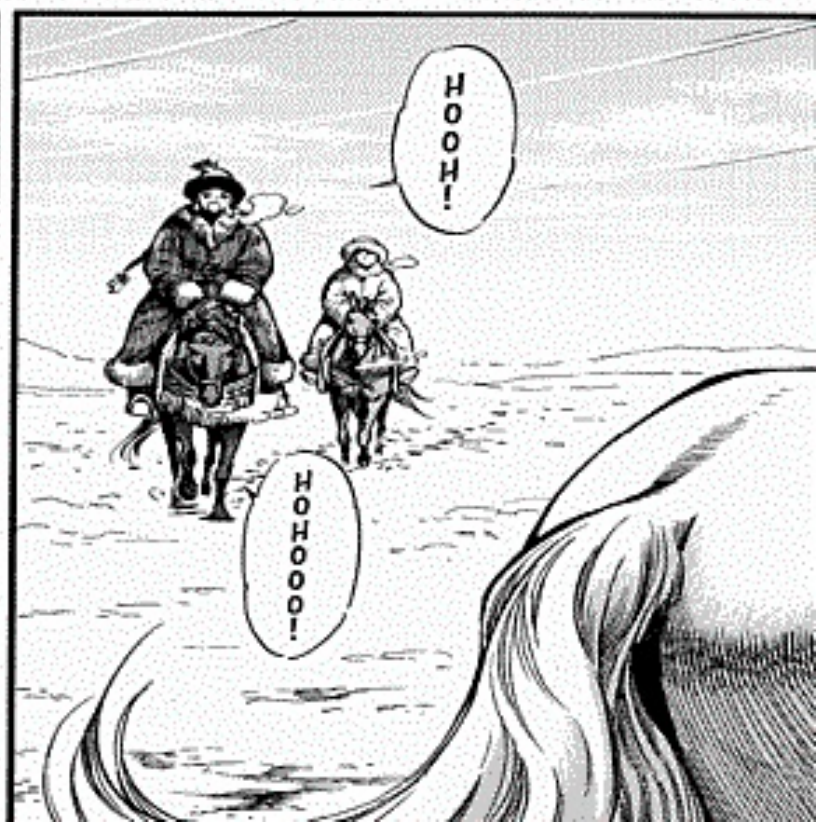


THOSE ARE
ALL OUR
HORSES.



OF
COURSE
THEY WILL!
THEY'RE
ALL VERY
SMART!

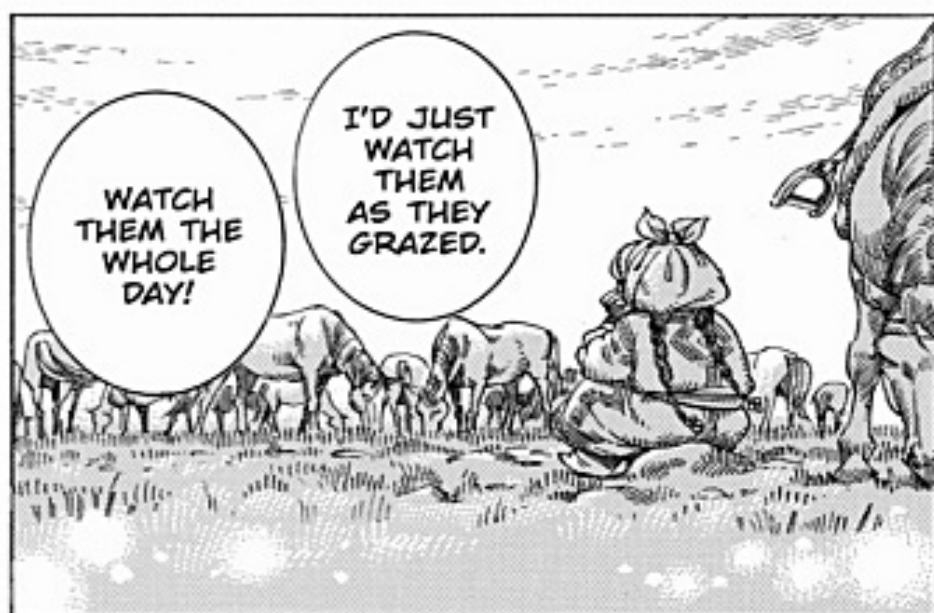
I
WONDER
IF THEY'LL
REMEMBER
YOU!



HOOH!

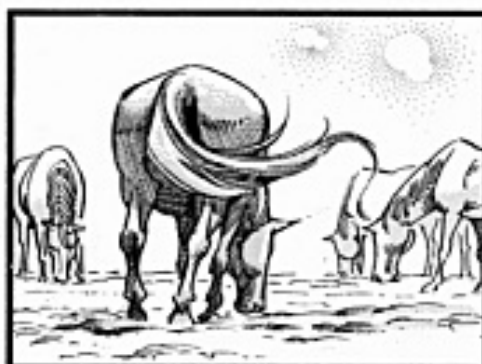
HOOHOO!







IS THAT
RIGHT?



WHICH
ONE DO
YOU LIKE
BEST?

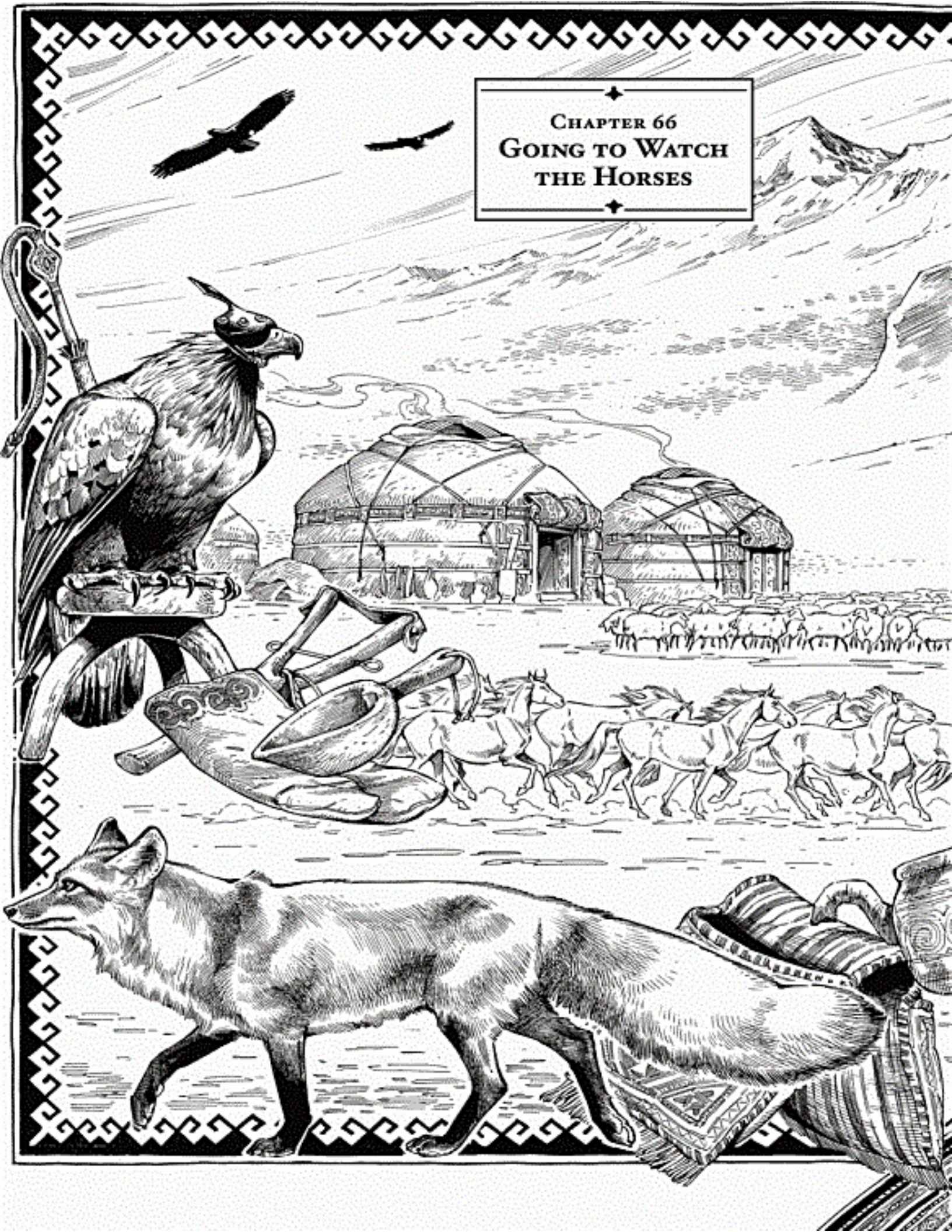


I LIKE
THE RED
ONE WITH
THE WHITE
SNOUT.

THAT
BLACK
HORSE.



CHAPTER 66
GOING TO WATCH
THE HORSES









WINTER
BRINGS A
SCARCITY OF
RATIONS.

AND WHEN
A COLD WAVE
COMES THROUGH,
THE LIVESTOCK
CAN DIE, AND
THEN WE'RE
REALLY AT A
LOSS.



ザク
ザク
ザク
ZAKU
OKINCHO

.....YES,
THAT'S
TRUE.



.....



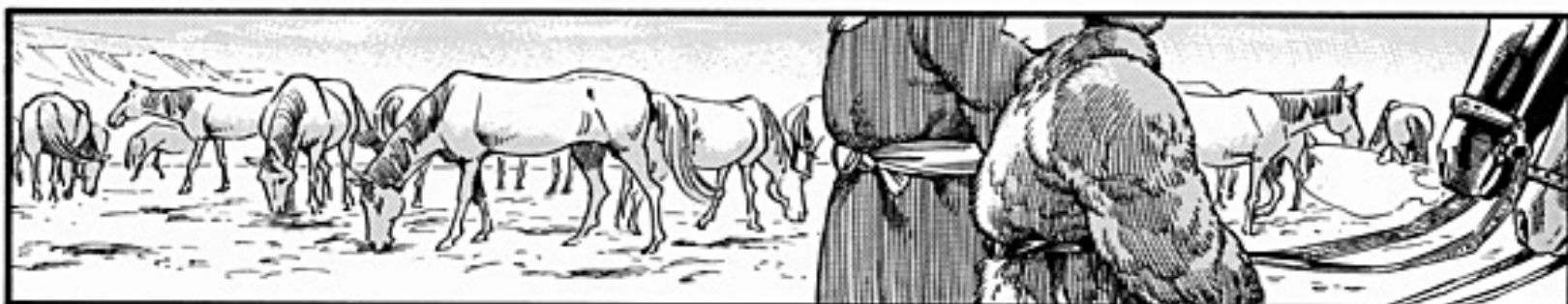
BUT...

...AFTER
YOU GET
USED TO IT,
YOU GET
TO SEE THE
BEAUTY TOO.



UH-
HUH...







THEY SAY,
EVEN WHEN
THERE WERE
MARRIAGE
OFFERS, HE
TURNED THEM
DOWN.

FATHER
WANTED TO
KEEP THE FEW
FEMALE HANDS
HE HAD LEFT.



...MY LATE
GRANDFATHER
CONVINCED
HIM FOR ME.

BUT...



...A SICKNESS
WENT AROUND,
AND MANY
MEMBERS OF MY
CLAN FELL ILL
AND DIED.

AT ONE
TIME...



...I
THOUGHT
FOR SURE
THAT THE
MAN THEY
HAD CHOSEN
FOR ME
WOULD BE
SOMEONE
VERY OLD.

SO WHEN
THE
DECISION
WAS
MADE...

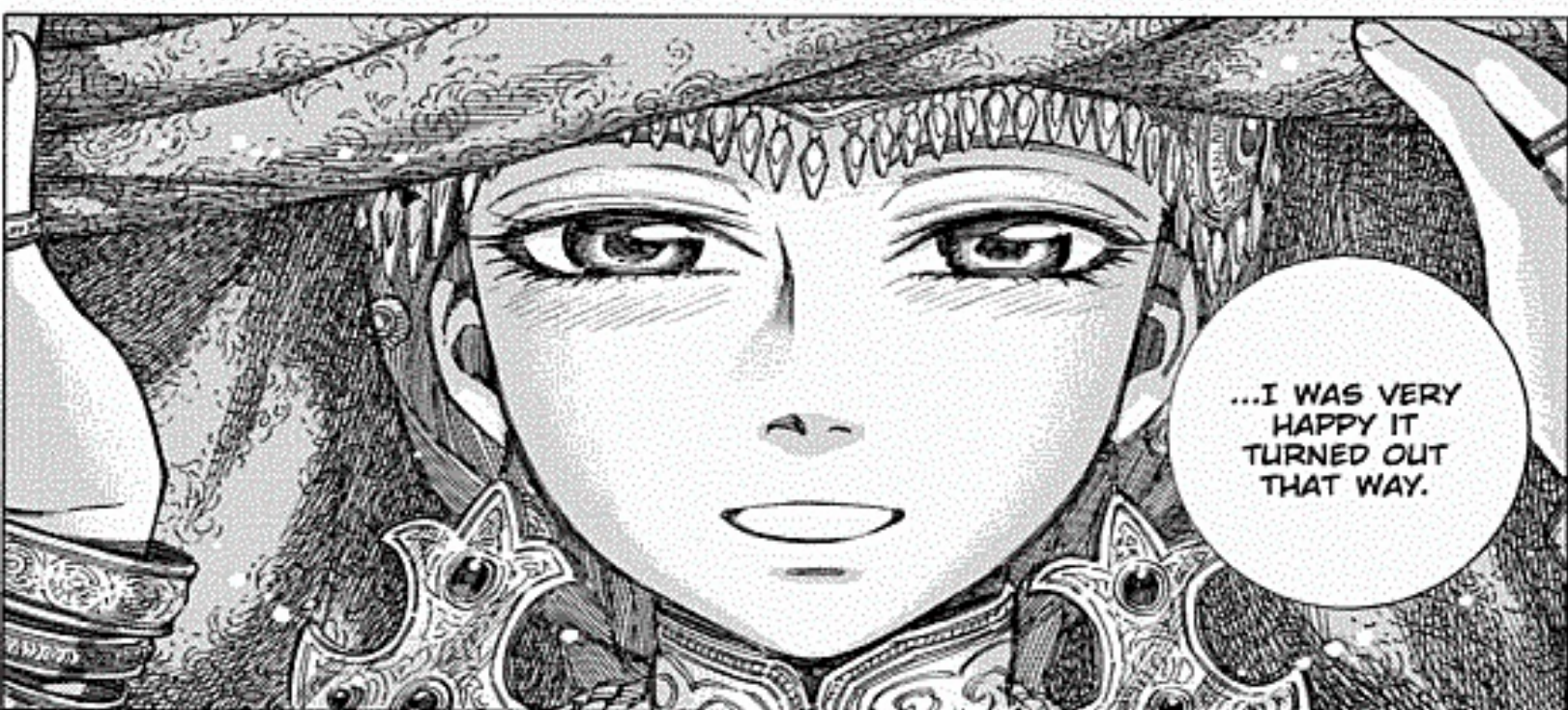
EVEN I
KNEW I WAS
GETTING
BEYOND
MARRIAGEABLE
AGE.



GO OUT
AND FIND
SOMEONE TO
MARRY HER
BEFORE
SHE GETS
ANY OLDER!

IT WOULD BE
A SHAME FOR
AMIR TO BE
LEFT TAKING
CARE OF THE
FAMILY FOR THE
REST OF HER
LIFE.









AH...



WHAT IS
IT YOU'RE
WORRIED
ABOUT?



I'M NOT
GROWN-UP
ENOUGH TO
BE MANLY.

I CAN'T
SHOW YOU MY
MANLINESS.



I MEAN...
YOU
KNOW...

GIRLS LIKE
MANLY MEN,
RIGHT?







EVEN A
WOLF GETS HIS
MEALS FROM
HIS MOTHER
WHEN HE'S
YOUNG.

AND EVEN
HE GETS
WEAK AS HE
GETS OLDER.



THAT IS
NOT HOW
THINGS
WORK.



BUT IT
DOES NOT
CHANGE
THE FACT
THAT HE IS
A WOLF.

HE IS THE
PROUD BLUE
WOLF.









I WILL.







◆
CHAPTER 67
VILLAGE ON
THE BORDER
◆



IT SEEMS
AN AGE
SINCE I LEFT
THE TOWN OF
KARLUK AND
HIS FAMILY.



AH...
THOSE MEN
HAVE ALREADY
GIVEN UP HOPE
AND STARTED
BREWING
THEIR TEA.



...ALL THE
WAY TO MY
DESTINATION,
ANKARA.

ALI IS
STILL
SERVING
AS MY
GUIDE...

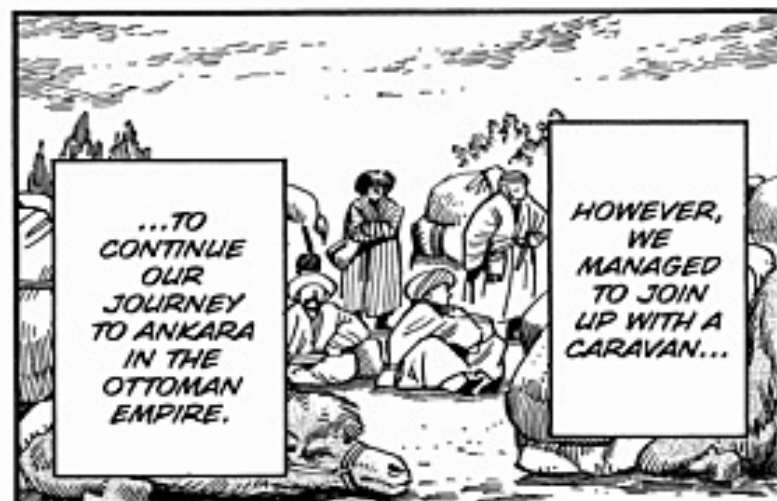


CASPIAN
SEA

ARAL
SEA

THE VARIOUS
REGIONS AND
PEOPLE WE
ENCOUNTERED
HAVE LEFT
A DEEP
IMPRESSION
ON ME.

THE
PEOPLE
CHANGE
ALONG
WITH THE
CHANGING
LAND-
SCAPE.



...TO
CONTINUE
OUR
JOURNEY
TO ANKARA
IN THE
OTTOMAN
EMPIRE.

HOWEVER,
WE
MANAGED
TO JOIN
UP WITH A
CARAVAN...



OUR
ROAD...

...HAS BEEN
FRAUGHT WITH
DISASTER.
BANDITS STOLE
OUR CAMELS
AND ALL THE
SUPPLIES
PACKED ON
THEM.



RATHER THAN
FACE THE
PASSES IN A
SNOWSTORM...

...I THINK
IT'S BETTER
TO WAIT AND
SEE.



WE HAD
STOPPED IN
THIS VILLAGE
TO OBTAIN
WATER
AND OTHER
SUPPLIES
WHEN...

...THE
CARAVAN
LEADER
SAID...

DON'T LIKE
THE WEATHER
IN THE
MOUNTAINS.



OTTOMAN
EMPIRE

RUSSIAN EMPIRE

CASPIAN
SEA

PERSIA

ONCE WE'VE
CROSSED
THE
MOUNTAINS,
WE WILL BE
IN IMPERIAL
TERRITORY.

PRESENTLY,
WE ARE ON
THE BORDER
OF PERSIA
AND THE
OTTOMAN
EMPIRE.



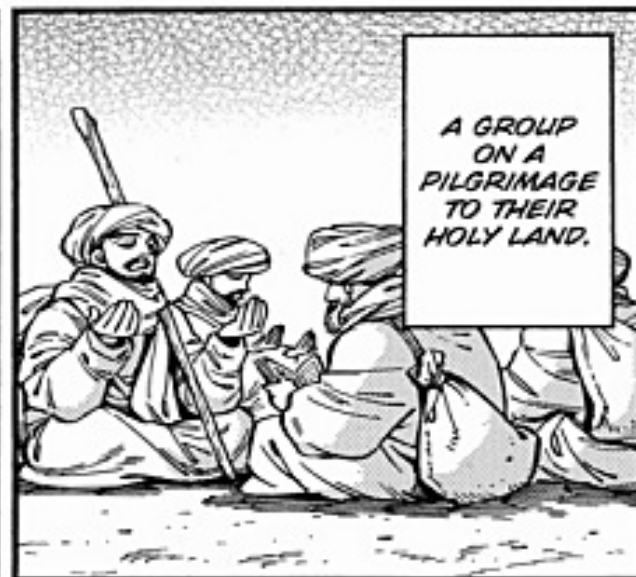
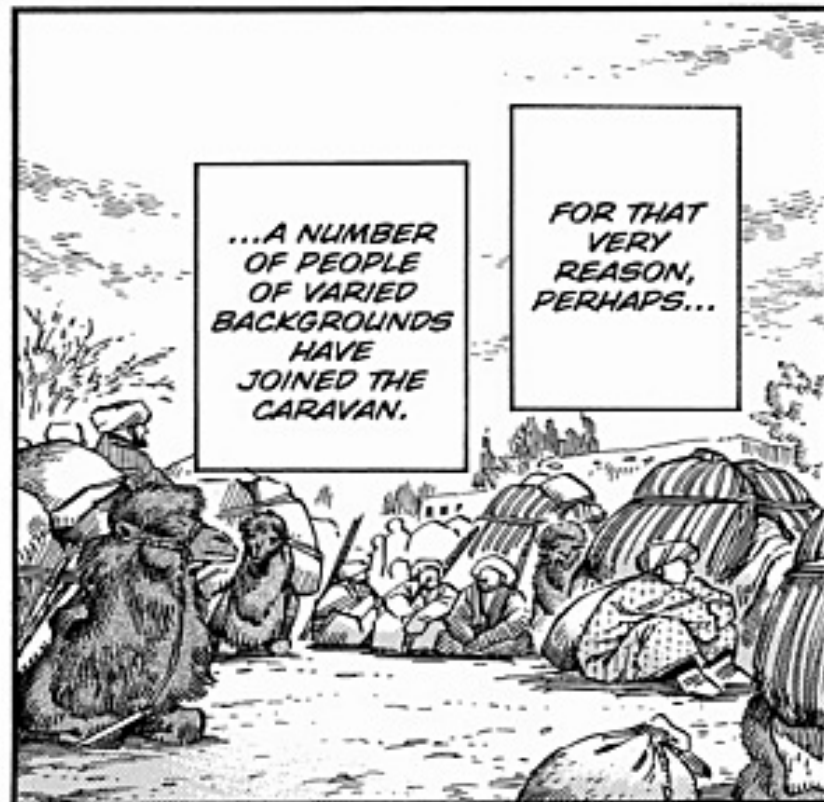
THE CAMELS
ARE BURDENED
WITH A LOAD
OF TRADE
GOODS OF
CONSIDERABLE
WEIGHT, SO
PROGRESS IS
SLOW.

EVEN SO, WE
HAVE LITTLE
CHOICE BUT
TO PROCEED
ALONG WITH
THE CARAVAN.



AND WITH
THAT, FOR A
NUMBER
OF LONG
HOURS...

...WE HAVE
BEEN
SITTING,
WAITING,
AND
OTHERWISE
DOING
NOTHING.









AFTER
SUCH A
LONG WAIT,
WE'RE STILL
STUCK.

THE WEATHER
DOESN'T SEEM
SO TERRIBLE, I
MUST SAY.



AHH...



WE NEVER
SEEM TO
PROCEED AS
I THINK WE
WILL.



IT'S ONLY
NATURAL
THEY'RE
OVERLY
CAUTIOUS.

A CARAVAN'S
JOB IS TO
TRANSPORT
THE TRADE
GOODS IN
ONE
PIECE.



HOLD
IT!
HOLD
IT!

WE
NEED A
ROOM
TOO!



I GOTTA
GO MAKE
SURE WE
GET A
ROOM TO
SLEEP IN!

IF I'M
NOT FAST,
WE'LL BE
STUCK
IN THE
STABLES!

AH!
YES!

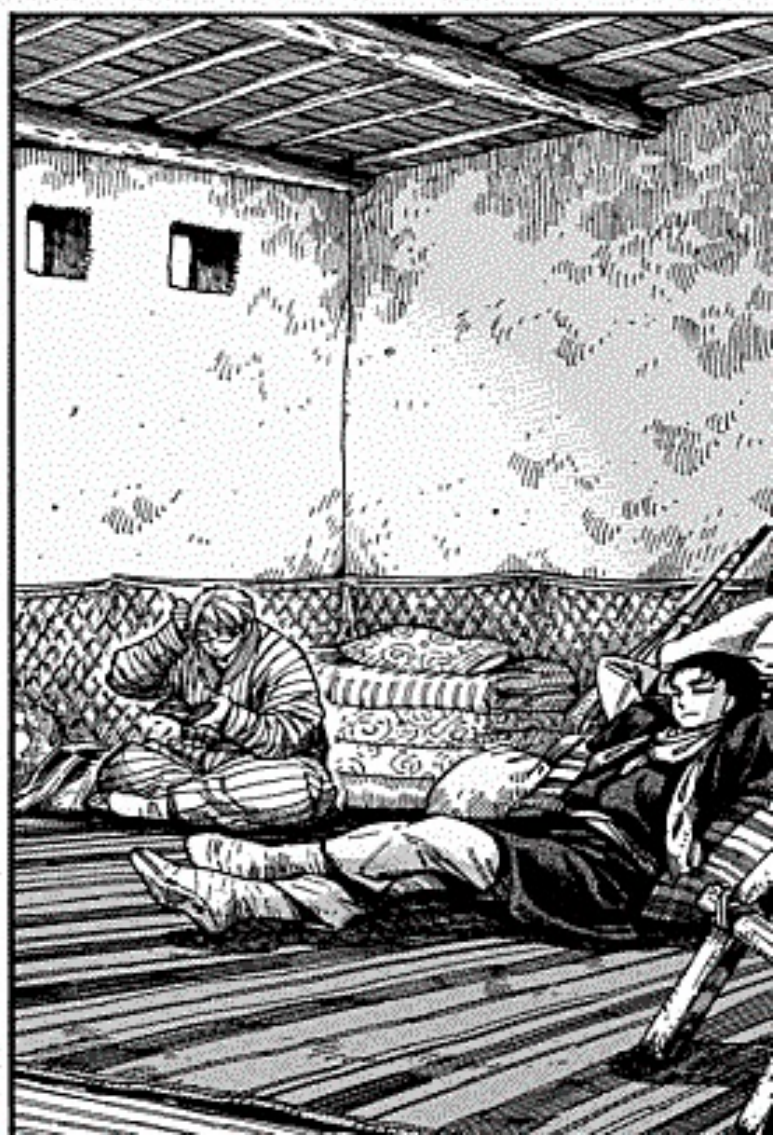


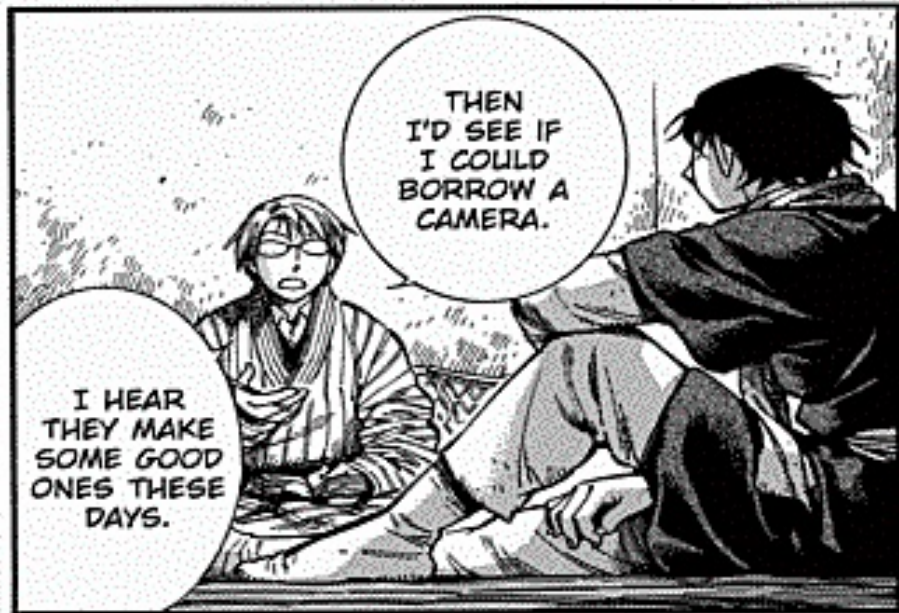
OH
NO!





JUST GRIN AND BEAR IT.









AND
THAT FIRST
PAYMENT WILL
COVER THIS
EXTRA TRIP?



...
RATHER
THAN
SOMEONE
NEW.

...SO I WOULD
PREFER TO BE
WITH SOMEONE
I KNOW...

I SHALL
HAVE
EXTRA
BAGGAGE
...



CAN'T
YOU?

OH,
PLEASE!



HMM...



YOU
SHOULDA
SAID THAT
FROM THE
START!

I'M
ALWAYS
HAPPY
TO GET
EXTRA
PAY!



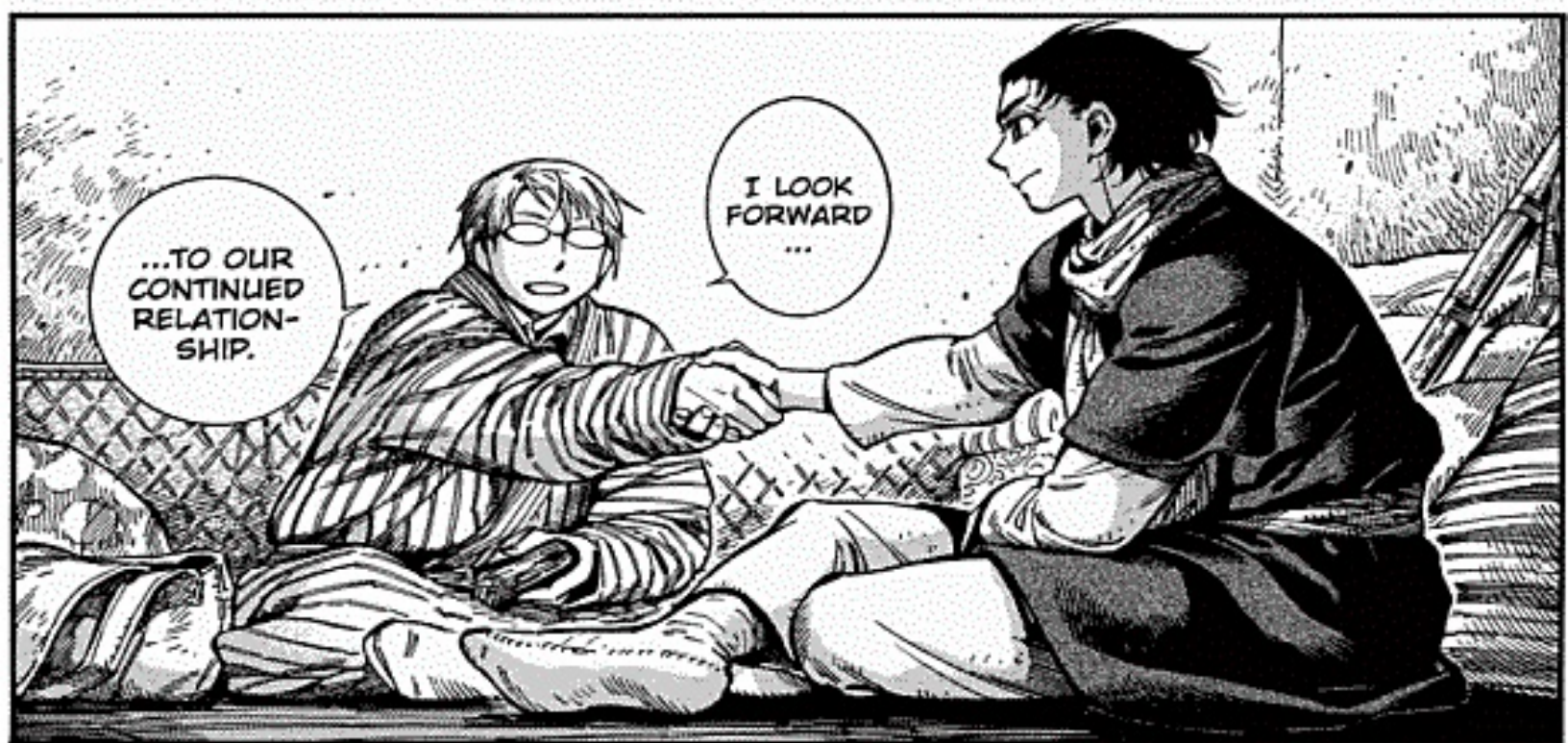
I'LL...

I'LL PAY
THE SAME
FOR GOING
BACK AS
COMING
HERE!

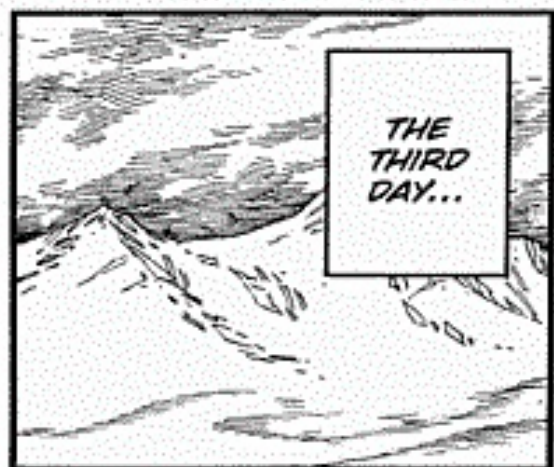
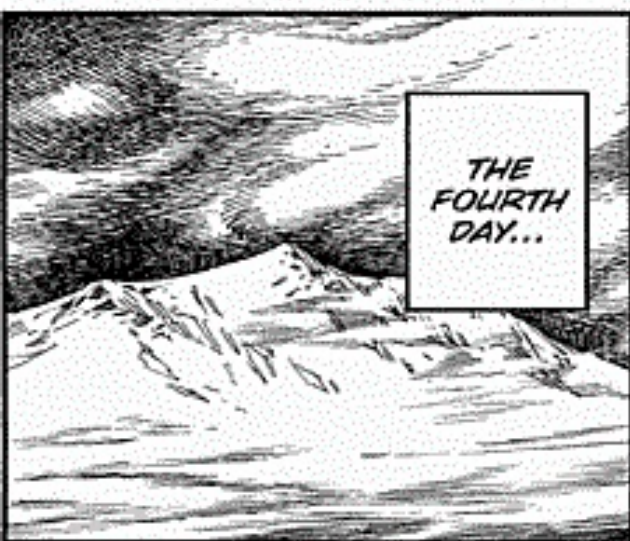
YOU WILL
OF COURSE
BE PAID AN
ADDITIONAL
FEE!



YOU'RE
ON!









ALL THIS WAITING CAN BE HARD ON A FELLOW AS WELL.



THE SIXTH DAY...



WHEE!
YAY!
THE CHILDREN HAVE COMPLETELY LOST INTEREST IN US.

WE'VE SEEN NEARLY ALL OF THE VILLAGE.



THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING TO DO.

THIS IS BORING.















PRETTY!

PRETTY!



WHEN
THERE WERE
NO MORE
CAMELS TO
SHEAR...

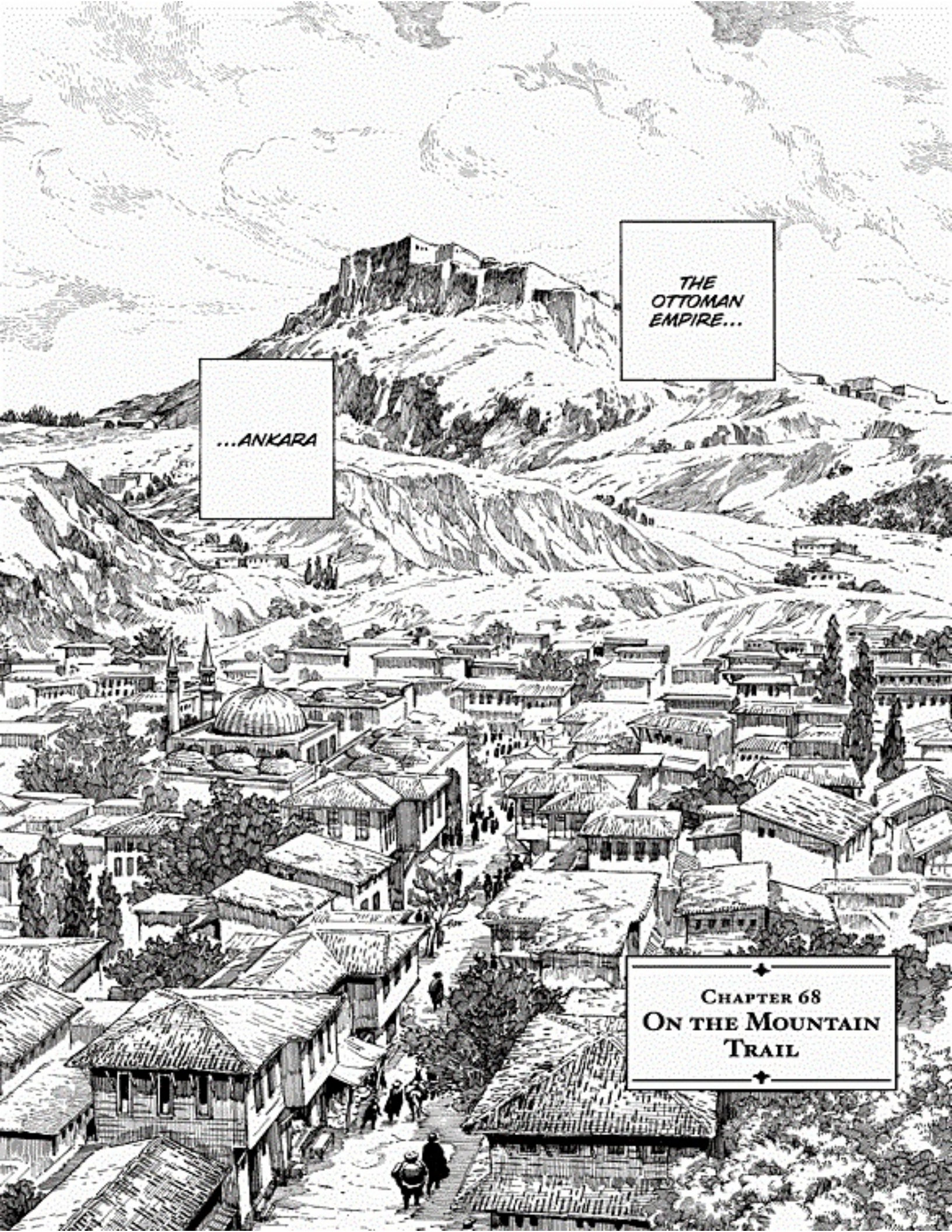
...YOU
FINISHED
YOUR
SPREE BY
SHEARING
ON A GOAT.



I
SUPPOSE
NOT.



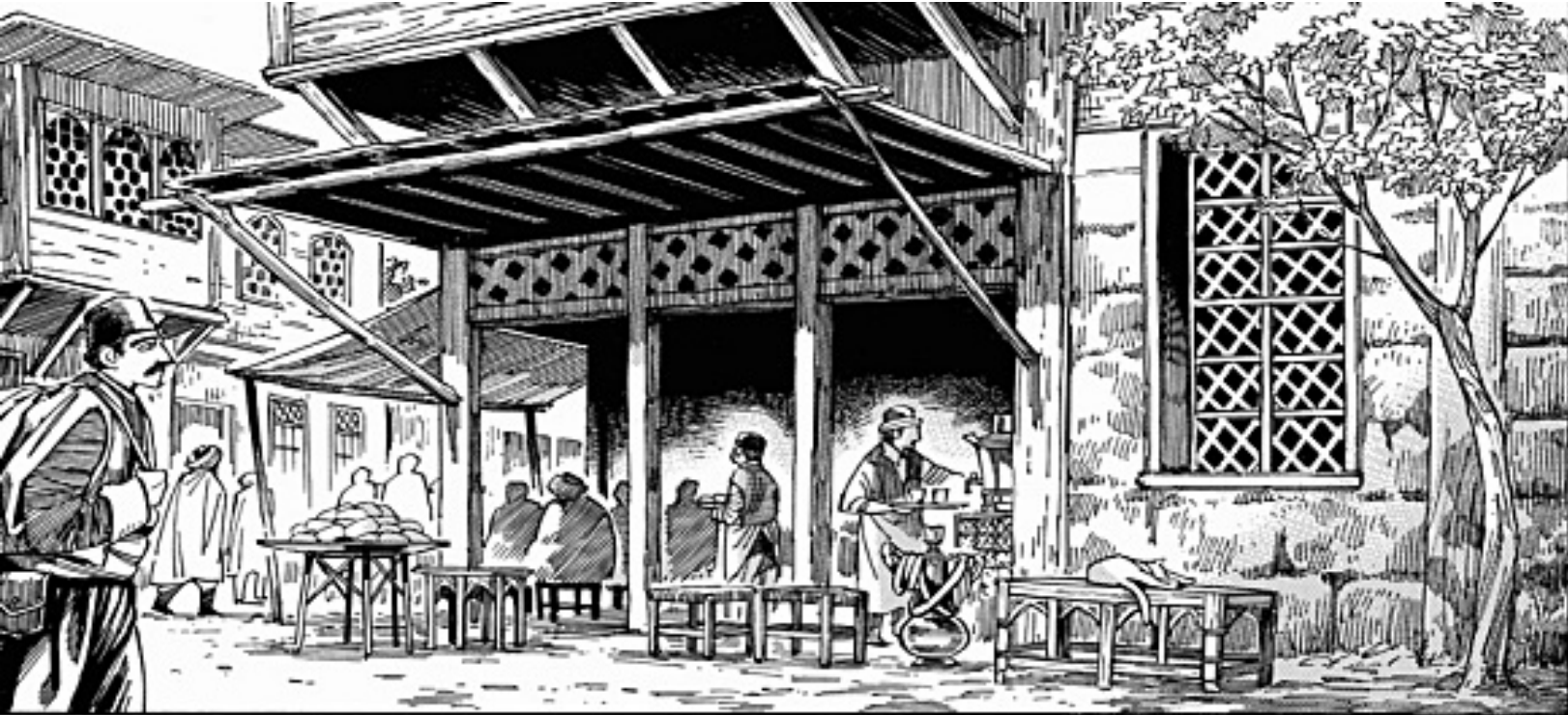




...ANKARA

THE
OTTOMAN
EMPIRE...

CHAPTER 68
ON THE MOUNTAIN
TRAIL





FORGIVE
ME, BUT
I HAVE A
FAVOR TO
ASK.

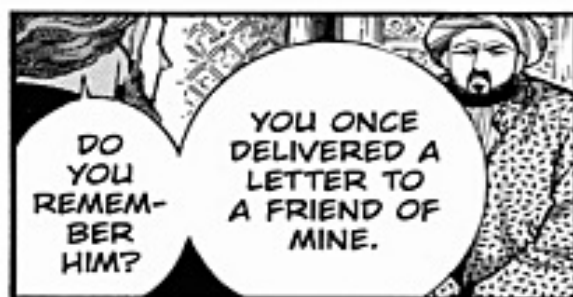
I'M
GLAD
YOU'VE
BEEN
FOUND.



.....YES.

SMITH.

HENRY
SMITH.



DO
YOU
REMEM-
BER
HIM?

YOU ONCE
DELIVERED A
LETTER TO
A FRIEND OF
MINE.



.....

A MR.
SMITH?



YOU
CALLED,
MR.
HAWKINS?

YES.



...BUT
EVEN
SO, HE'S
LATE.



I AM
AWARE THAT
OFTEN THE
PLANS OF
TRAVELERS
GO AWRY...



IT HAS
BEEN QUITE A
WHILE SINCE
HE WROTE TO
SAY HE WAS
COMING TO
ANKARA.

HE
SHOULD
HAVE
ARRIVED
SOME TIME
AGO.



I MUST
ASK YOU
TO LOOK
INTO THIS.

EVEN IF IT
IS MERELY A
RUMOR OF
HIS WHERE-
ABOUTS.



OR IS
THERE SOME
OTHER
REASON
HE HASN'T
ARRIVED?

HAS HIS
ARRIVAL
SIMPLY BEEN
DELAYED...?



.....

I
UNDER-
STAND.



HE
HAS BEEN
KNOWN TO
DAWDLER.

I DO
NOT WANT
HIM IN
DANGER.

AND AT
TIMES, HIS
CURIOSITY
CAN GET HIM
TERRIBLY
SIDETRACKED.





.....THIS
ROAD IS
CERTAINLY
SOMETHING,
ISN'T IT?



I'M
SURE IT IS
FINE AFTER
ONE GETS
USED TO IT,
BUT...



...THEN
WHAT
POSSIBLE
CHANCE
DO I
HAVE!?

I MEAN,
IF EVEN
TRADERS
FALL
DOWN
THERE...



EH!?

IN THESE
PARTS,
EVEN THOSE
WHO ARE
USED TO IT
FALL.



SPARE ME
THOSE
REMARKS!

PLEASE !!

IN FACT,
AREN'T THOSE
PEOPLE WHO
HAVE FALLEN
DOWN BELOW
US NOW?



SO WHAT I'M SAYING IS, YOU SHOULD TAKE CARE EVEN IF YOU GET USED TO IT.

THE ONES WHO ARE USED TO IT FALL. THEY FALL BECAUSE THEY KNOW THE ROAD.



I'M TELLING YOU TO BE CAREFUL.



YES?

EH?

WHAT DID YOU ASK?



YES, I DO.

AH!

YOU GOT A FRIEND IN ANKARA WAITING FOR YOU, RIGHT?



ALTHOUGH, HE IS QUITE A BIT OLDER THAN I AM.

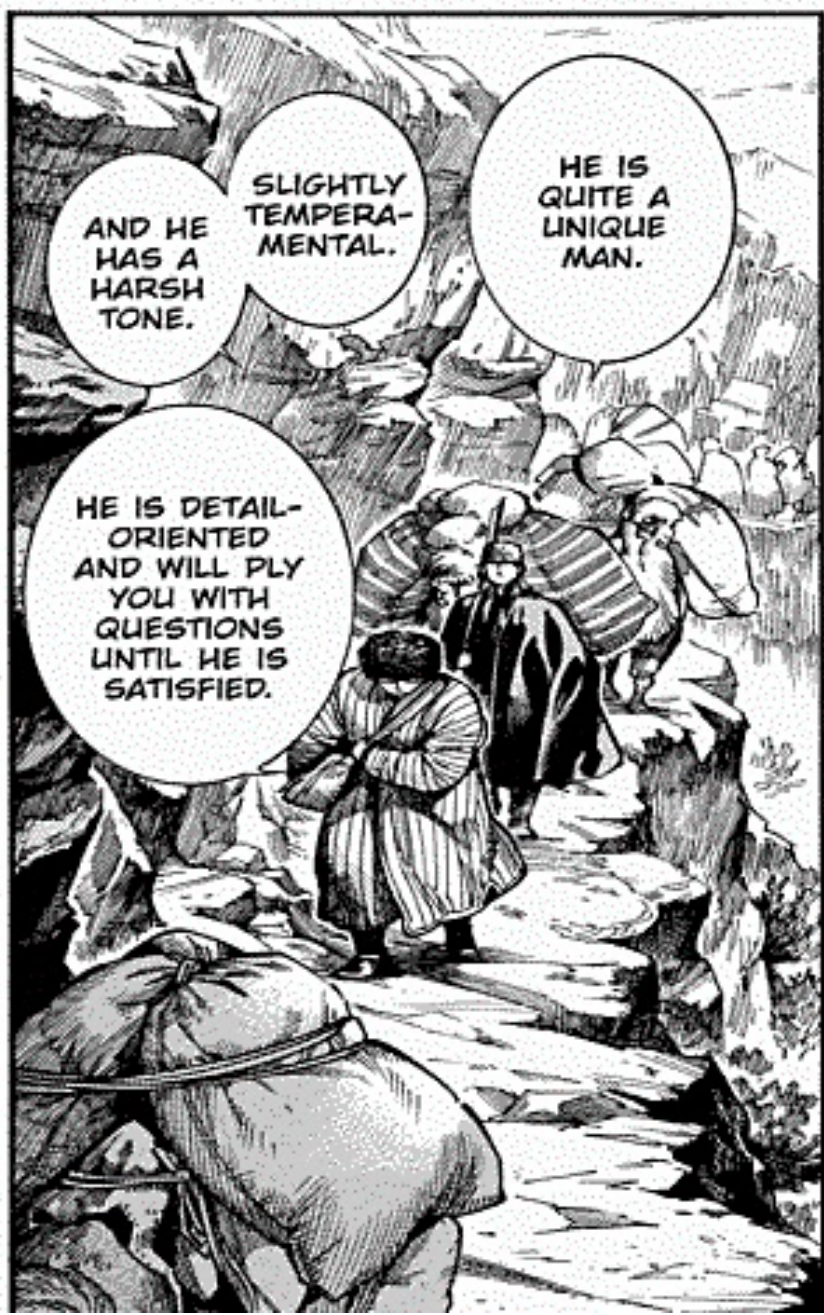


QUITE A LONG TIME NOW THAT I THINK ON IT.

WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER SINCE OUR SCHOOL DAYS.



SAY, WHAT KIND OF GUY IS THIS FRIEND OF YOURS?



*I deeply
apologize for
the worry
I may have
caused you
regarding
your son.*

*My dearest
Mrs.
Smith—*



*I feel certain
I shall be
sending you
good news in
the very near
future.*

*I am afraid
we have
yet to be
reunited...*

*...though
I have
dispatched
servants to
ascertain
his progress.*



*Unfortunately,
it has not
altogether
stopped
Russia's
encroachment
to the south.*

*Their
determination
to obtain a
port that does
not freeze in
the winter is
boundless.*

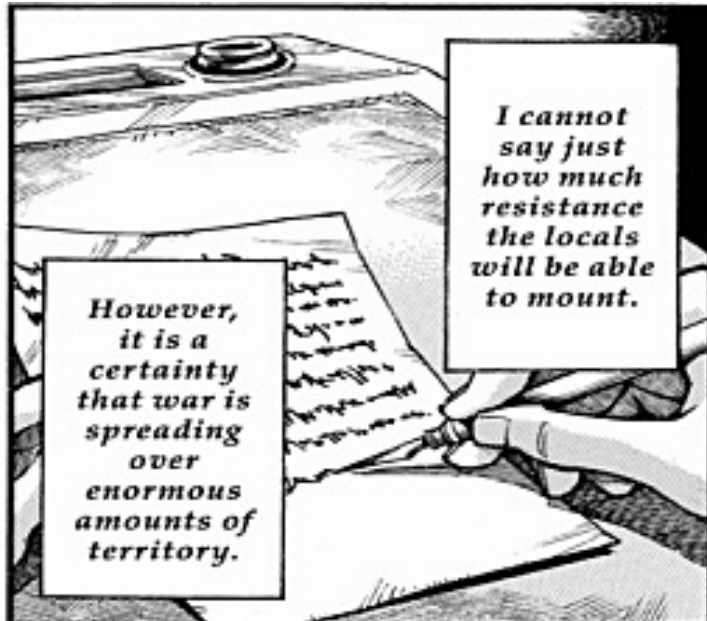


*...the war that
has engulfed
the Crimean
peninsula...*

*As you
are no
doubt
well
aware...*

*...has managed
to halt Russian
advancement
into the Ottoman
Empire and the
surrounding seas.*





However,
it is a
certainty
that war is
spreading
over
enormous
amounts of
territory.

I cannot
say just
how much
resistance
the locals
will be able
to mount.



...and they are
getting serious
with their
movements
toward
Turkestan.

The Russians
are invading
on a number
of fronts...





I shall spare
no effort to
ensure that he
returns safely
to you and
England.

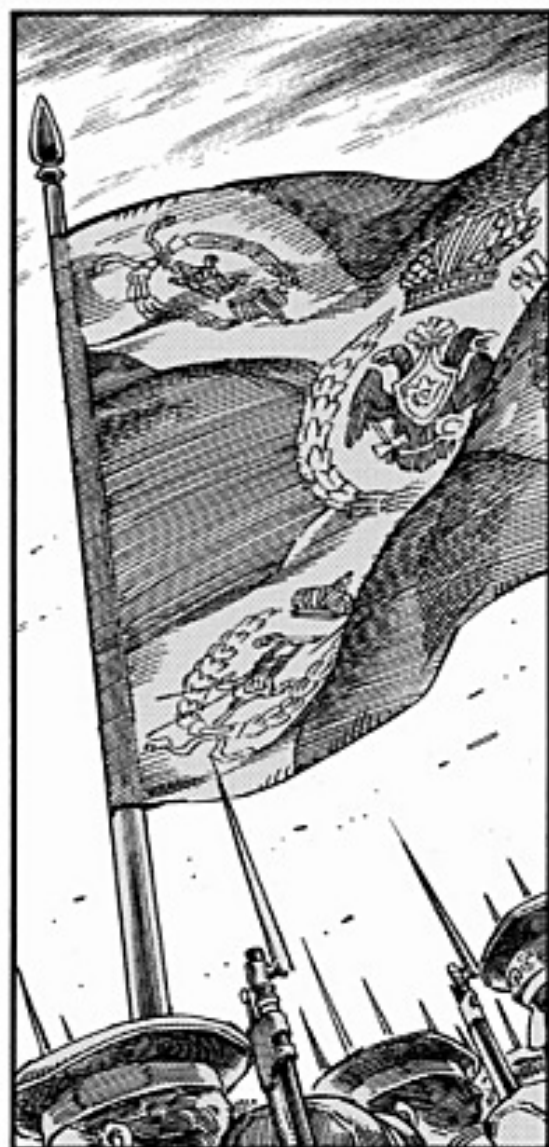


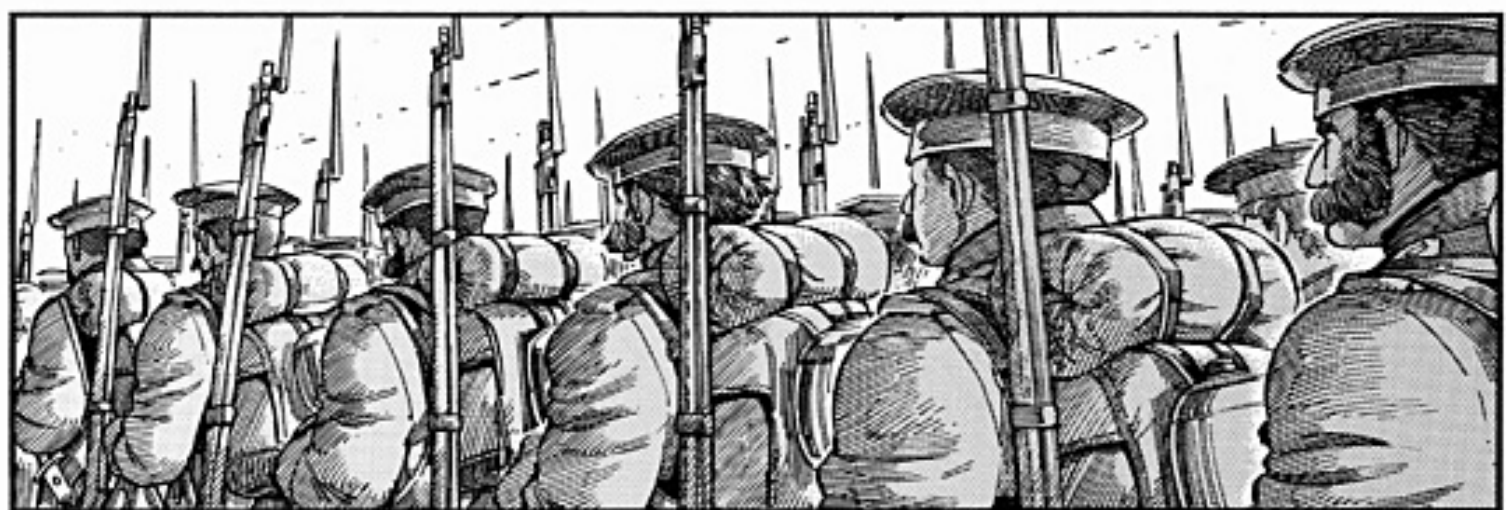
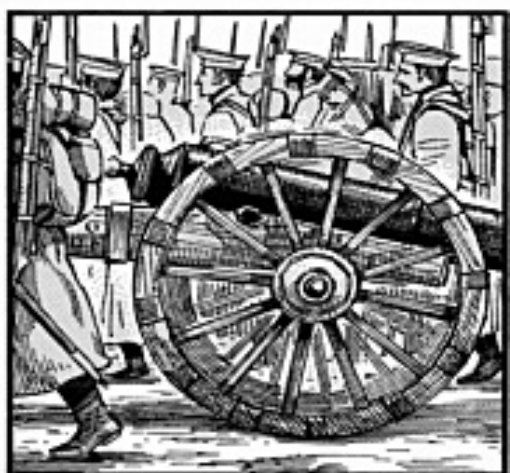
Please
rest
assured
of that.

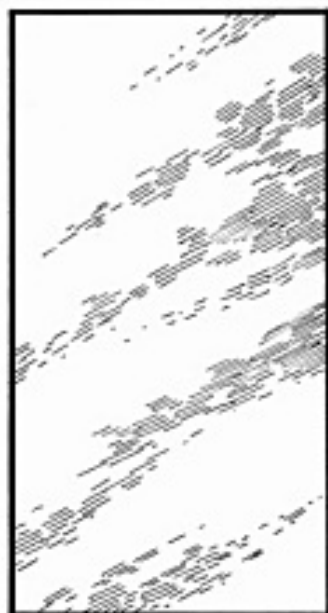


...is dear
to me
as well.

Rest
assured
your son,
Henry
Smith...













WHAT WAS
THAT ABOUT,
DO YOU
SUPPOSE?



Y...

YES!



VEN-
GEANCE?

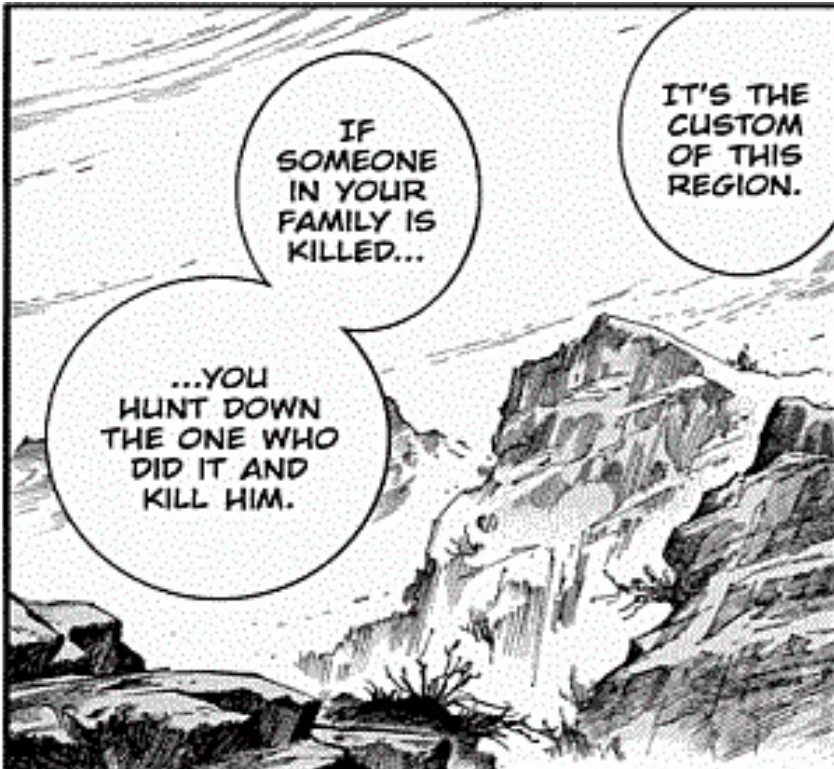


SOMEONE
RUNNING
FROM
VENGEANCE.



BLOOD
FOR
BLOOD IS
THE RULE
OF THIS
AREA.

SO SOME
PEOPLE RUN
AND TRY TO
LIVE IN THE
MOUNTAINS.



IF
SOMEONE
IN YOUR
FAMILY IS
KILLED...

IT'S THE
CUSTOM
OF THIS
REGION.

...YOU
HUNT DOWN
THE ONE WHO
DID IT AND
KILL HIM.



ACK!



WHAT
DOES
THAT
MEAN?

CAN
YOU GIVE
ME A
LITTLE
MORE
DETAIL?



ALI,
NO...

NOT
YOU
TOO...



IF
SOMEONE
WAS KILLED
SEVEN GEN-
ERATIONS
EARLIER...

...THEN YOU
GET REVENGE,
EVEN IF IT
TAKES SEVEN
MORE GEN-
ERATIONS.

THE
RULE IS
ABSO-
LUTE.



IT'S A
MATTER
OF
PRIDE.

YOU CANNOT
LIVE AS A
VICTIM.



WE
DON'T
HAVE THAT
CUSTOM
WHERE
I COME
FROM.

BUT
THERE'S
SOMETHING
SIMILAR.
THERE'S
ALWAYS
SOMETHING
SIMILAR.

PROBABLY.

AND THUS,
SOMEONE
WOULD GO
TO SUCH
LENGTHS TO
ESCAPE...?



...BUT A
MAN CAN'T
SIMPLY
FORGET THE
TASTE OF
BREAD.

MEAT CAN
KEEP YOU
ALIVE...

HE SAID HE
WANTED TO
TRADE PELTS
FOR EITHER
WHEAT OR
BREAD.

THAT'S
RIGHT.

SIXTEEN
YEARS...

WELL, HE
SAID HE'S
BEEN LIVING
IN THESE
MOUNTAINS
FOR SIXTEEN
YEARS,
AFTER ALL.

...BUT
EVEN SO,
HE CAME
OUT AND
RISKED
IT.

HE KNEW
HE WAS IN
DANGER
OF BEING
CAUGHT...



HAAH...



DIDN'T I
TELL YOU
THIS WAS
VEN-
GEANCE?

DON'T
GO
PITYING
HIM.



...AND LIVING
ALL ALONE
IN THE
MOUNTAINS?

FOR
A FULL
SIXTEEN
YEARS,
HE'S BEEN
RUNNING
...



YES...

I
SUPPOSE.



YOU
DON'T WANT
TO FACE
THE CONSE-
QUENCES,
THEN DON'T
DO THE
KILLING!

THE
ONE WHO
STARTED
THE
KILLING IS
AT FAULT
HERE.





I WAS
TOLD HE'S
BEEN SEEN
AROUND
HERE.



IF I
MAY
ASK A
QUES-
TION...











CHAPTER 69
REUNION



WELL, THIS
IS WHERE
WE PART.



THANK YOU
SO MUCH
FOR YOUR
KINDNESS.



WE
WILL MAKE
OUR WAY
DIRECTLY TO
ISTANBUL
FROM
HERE.



THEN
I'LL BE
TAKING
OUR
BAGGAGE
DOWN.



I SUSPECT
MY FRIEND,
HAWKINS,
IS AWAITING
MY
ARRIVAL...

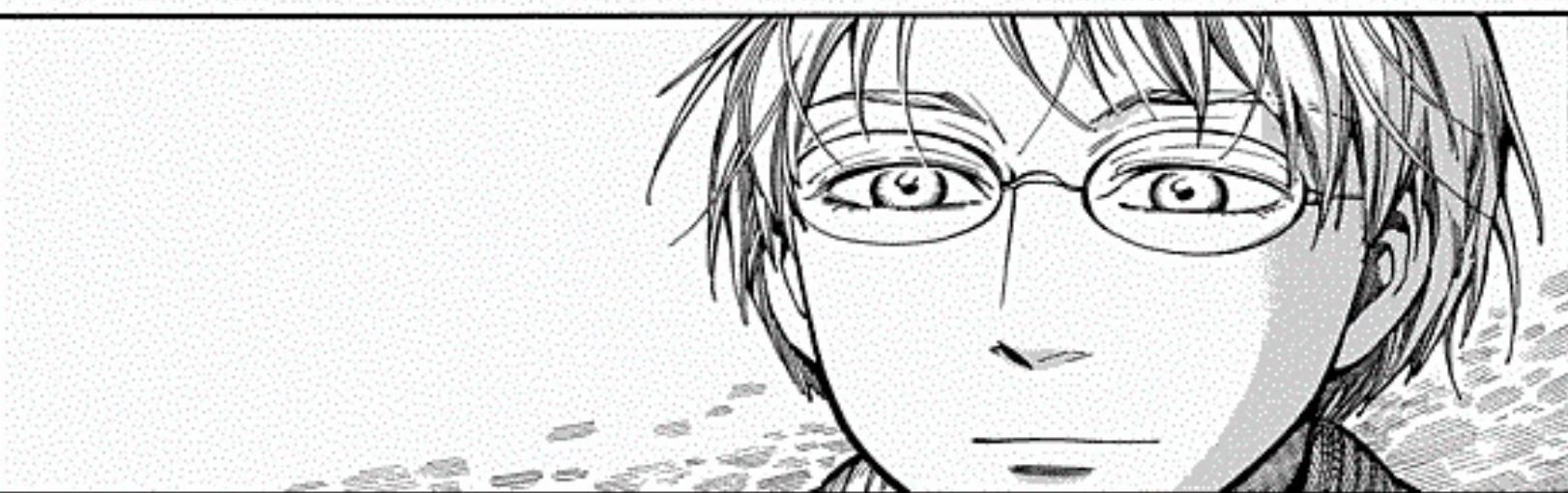
...SO
I'LL GO
SHOW MY
FACE QUICK.



NOW
WHAT?

AH. GOOD
QUESTION.











RECORDING
OR NOT IS
NOT THE
ISSUE.

...YOUR
KNOWLEDGE,
YOUR
EXPERIENCE,
AND YOUR
MEMORIES
WILL ALL BE
LOST.

BUT
IF YOU
WIND UP
DEAD,
SMITH...



AS LONG
AS YOU'RE
LIVING,
THERE
WILL BE
ANOTHER
CHANCE.



.....

SUPPOSING
THAT IS
TRUE...



YOU ARE
SO CERTAIN
I WILL DIE?



NATIONS
ARE ON
THE MOVE
HERE.

THIS ISN'T
SOME SPAT
BETWEEN
CLANS.

I'M
SAYING IT'S
JUST THAT
DANGEROUS
OUT
THERE!



IF THE
BEHISTUN
INSCRIPTION
HADN'T BEEN
FOUND,
WE'D BE
STRUGGLING
TO READ
ANCIENT
PERSIAN
TODAY.

WE WON'T
KNOW WHAT
WILL BE
LOST UNTIL
IT'S LOST.



IT
COULD BE
YEARS
BEFORE
I'M ABLE
TO COME
AGAIN...

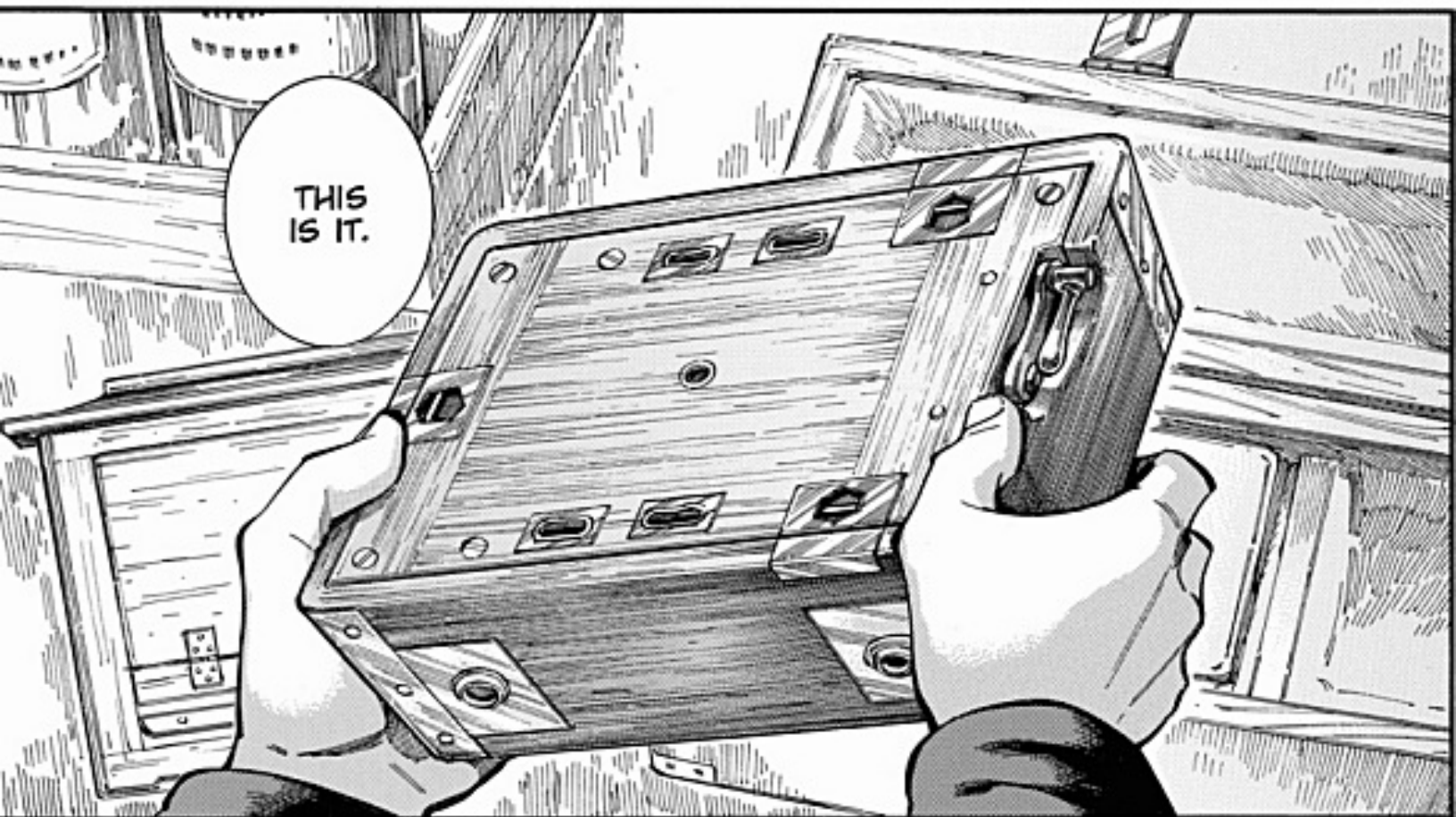
...AND
EVERYTHING
MIGHT HAVE
CHANGED BY
THEN.



...THEN IT
SEEMS ONLY
TO DOUBLY
CONFIRM THIS
IS MY LAST
CHANCE.









I'LL GIVE
YOU A
COMPLETE
RUNDOWN
LATER.

IDEALLY,
YOU'D HAVE
SOMEONE
HELPING
YOU.....



UM...
HOW DOES
IT GO
AGAIN?

THIS
DESIGN
IS SO
MODERN!

DO YOU
UNDER-
STAND
HOW IT'S
USED?



YOU! BE
CAREFUL
WITH
THAT!

IT'S
EXTREMELY
FRAGILE...



AH! MY
GUIDE WILL
DO FOR
THAT.

SHALL
WE ASK
HIM?



HE SAYS
HE KNOWS
SOMETHING
OF IT.



THAT
SHOULD
HASTEN
THE
LESSON.

.....



I'VE SEEN
THEM
BEFORE.

YOU
SPREAD
SOMETHING
ON THE
PLATE,
RIGHT?



I HOPE
YOUR
FAMOUS
CURIOSITY
KEEPS YOU
HERE AWHILE.



IT ISN'T
ISTANBUL,
IT'S
TRUE...

...BUT
THERE ARE A
NUMBER OF
FASCINATING
SITES HERE
AS WELL.



YOU NEEDN'T
LEAVE
IMMEDIATELY,
MUST YOU?

STAY HERE
AWHILE AND
REST UP.



ALL
RIGHT!
ANYWAY,
HERE IS
YOUR PAY
SO FAR.

I SUP-
POSE.



...AND
AT TIMES,
SEEING THE
SIGHTS IS
A GOOD
THING.

MY
MONEY
POUCH
ISN'T
WANTING
FOR COINS...



DO YOU
HAVE ANY
ERRANDS
HERE?

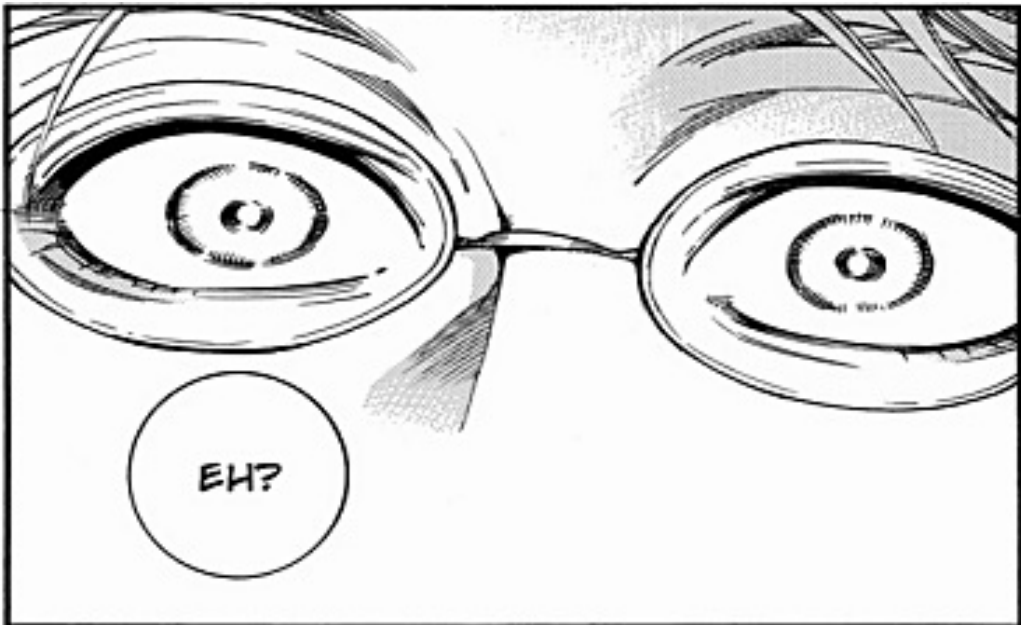
ALI, IF YOU
WISH FOR
SOME FREE
TIME, YOU
MAY TAKE
IT AT YOUR
LEISURE.

AND IT
SEEMS LIKE
MORE FUN
TAGGING
ALONG WITH
YOU.

NO,
NOTHING
SPECIAL.













I
MARRIED HER
THROUGH AN
ARRANGEMENT
WITH MY
RELATIVES.



NO
ONE HAD
MENTIONED
IT TO ME
BEFORE-
HAND...

WELL,
THAT
ISN'T
GOOD
FOR ME
EITHER.

...SO I WAS
AT A LOSS
FOR WHAT
TO DO.



WHEN
WE MET
ON OUR
WEDDING
DAY...

...SHE WAS
IN TEARS
BECAUSE
SHE LOVED
SOMEONE
ELSE.



WELL, I
COULDN'T
JUST LET
HER GO
ALONE.

WHEN I
ASKED
WHAT SHE
WANTED...

...SHE SAID
SHE'D LIKE
TO GO AND
FIND YOU.



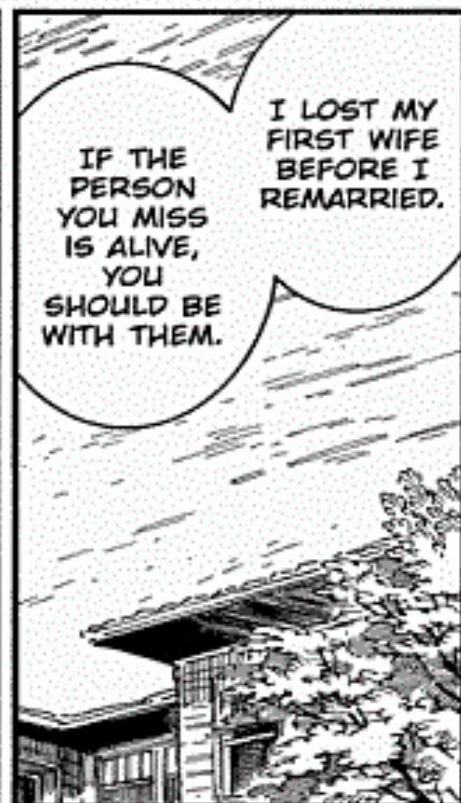
I MEAN, WE
ARE SORT
OF MARRIED,
AFTER ALL.

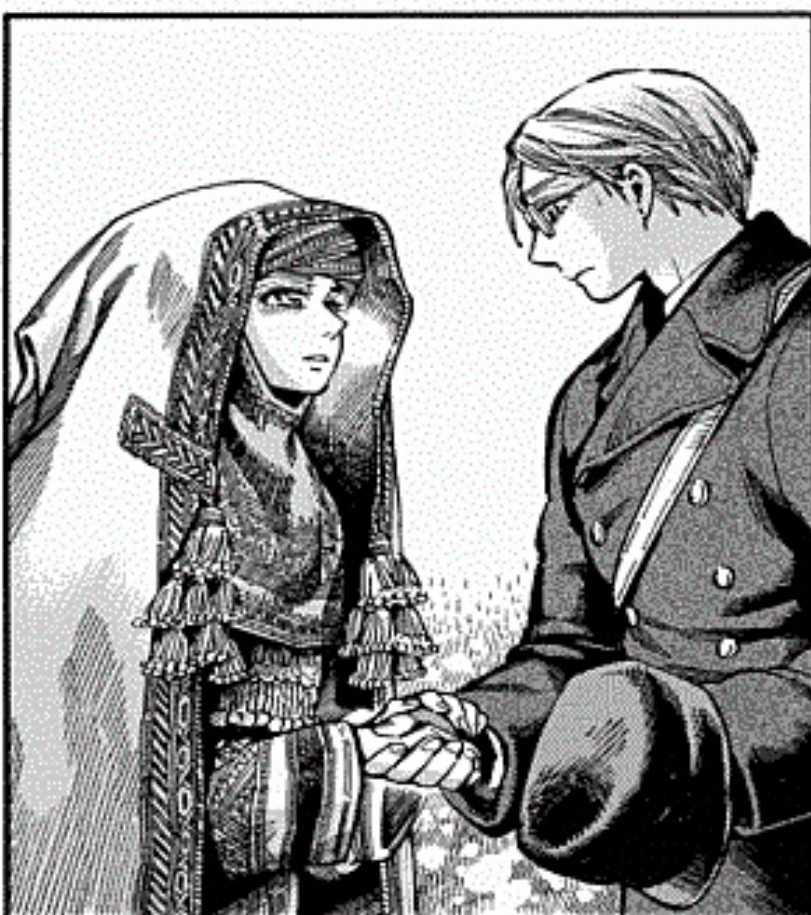
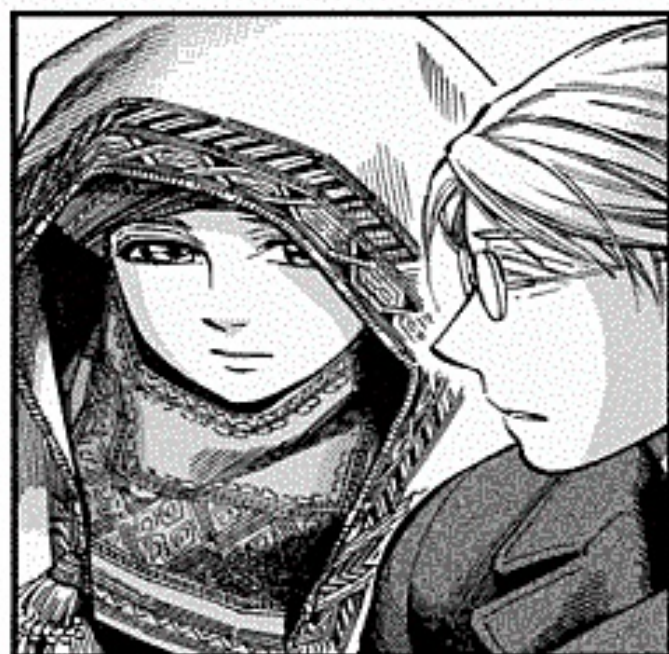
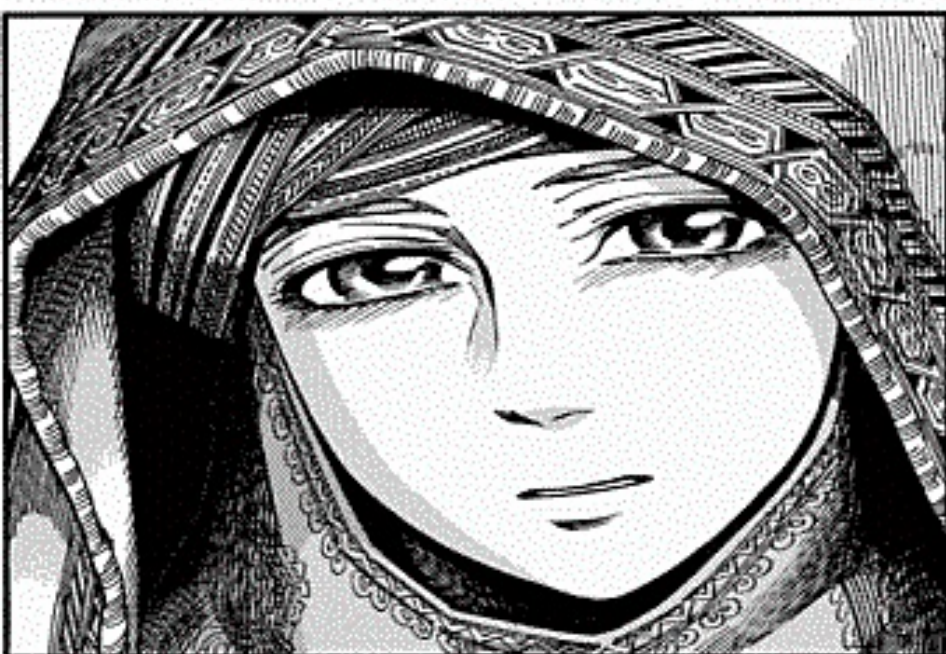
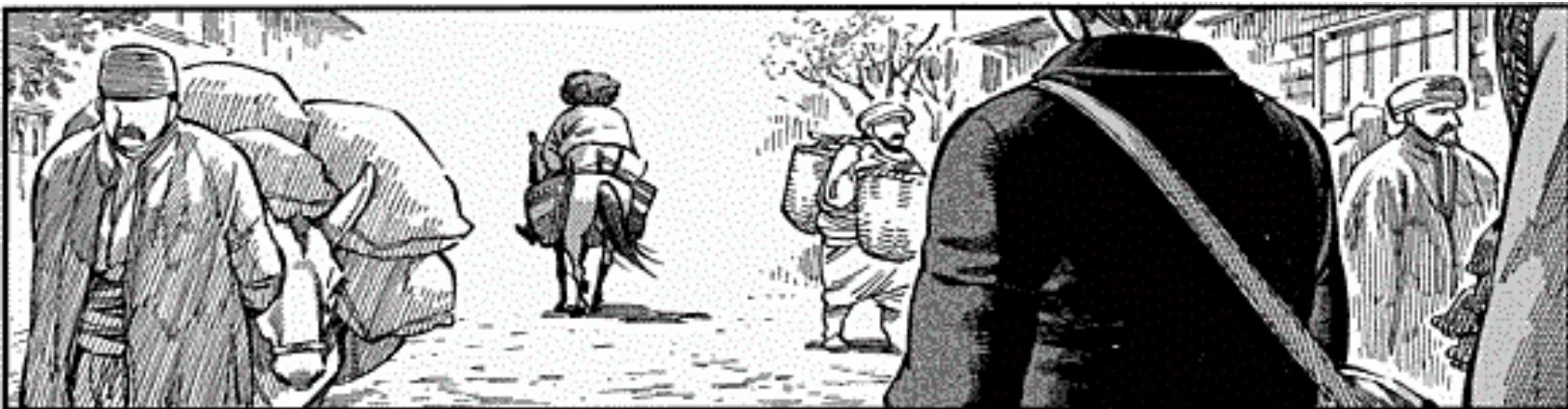




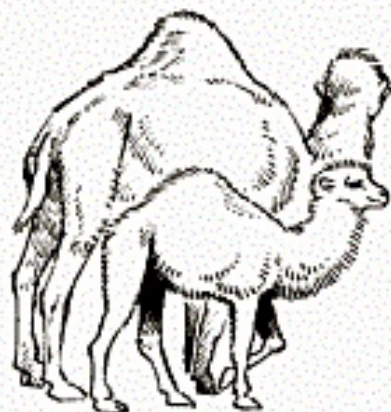


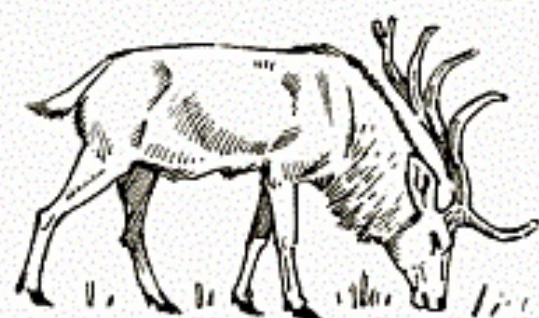




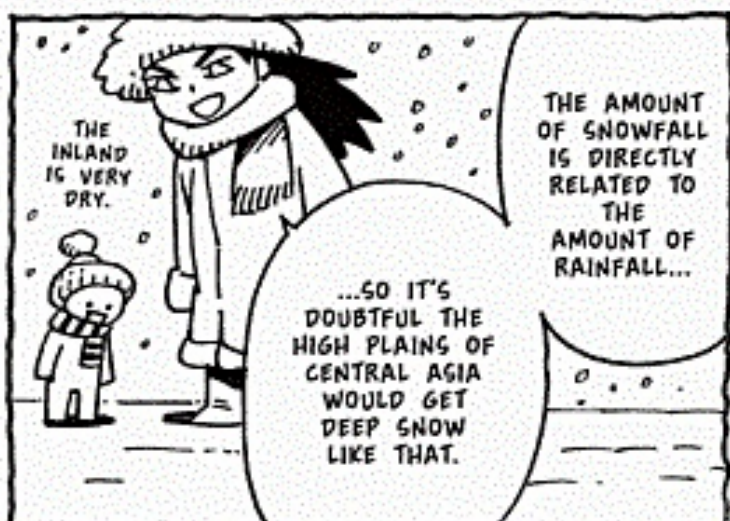
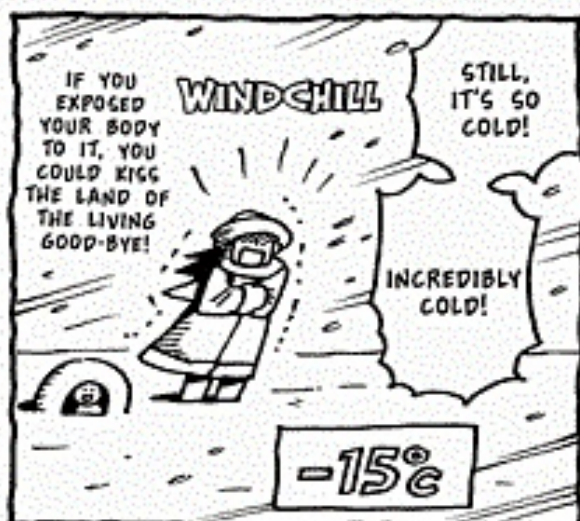
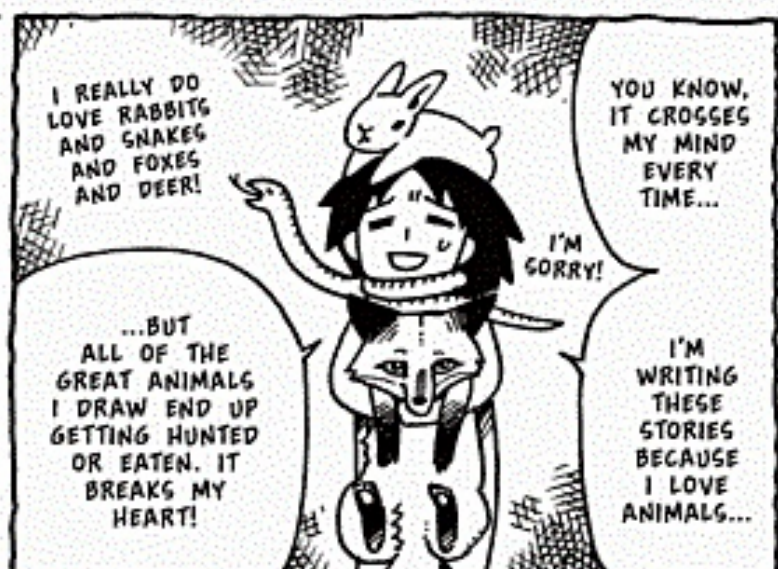
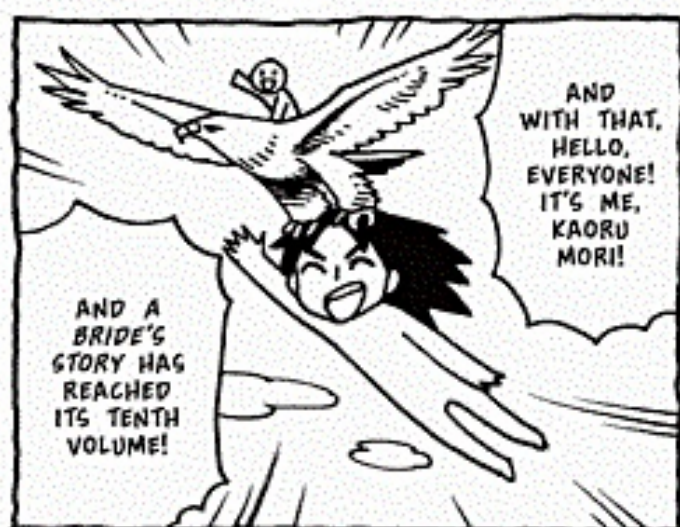
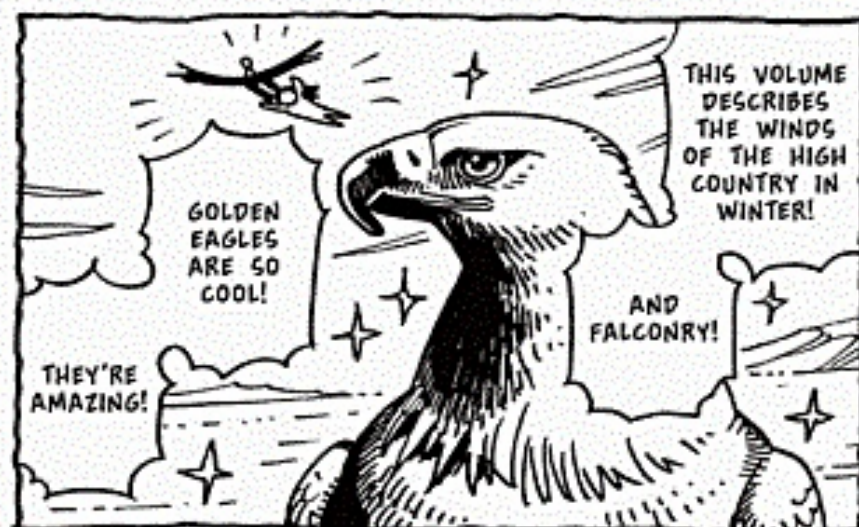


AFTERWORD





COME, FALLING SNOW! COME, FALLING HAIL!



NOTE: THE AFTERWORD TITLE REFERS TO ANOTHER FAMOUS JAPANESE SONG FOR CHILDREN. THE LYRICS CELEBRATE WINTER AND CALL FOR THE SNOW AND HAIL BECAUSE IT GIVES A HAT TO THE MOUNTAINS. IT ALSO NOTES HOW THE DOGS PLAY IN THE SNOW WHILE THE CAT CURLS UP UNDER THE KOTATSU (TABLE WITH A HEATER).

...WOOL WAS THE CLOTH FOR MOUNTAIN CLIMBING.

THERE WAS AN AGE WHEN, AS A RULE...

THOUGH, IT'S SYNTHETIC MATERIALS NOWADAYS.



WOOL HAS A NATURAL WICKING PROPERTY AND IS SUPPOSED TO DRAW THE MOISTURE OFF YOUR BODY AND INTO THE AIR.

INSTEAD, YOU GET NUDE AND SLEEP SANDWICHED BETWEEN THE WOOL OF SHEEP PELTS, AND IT'S VERY WARM.



IF YOU SLEEP IN SOMETHING THAT RETAINS MOISTURE, THE SWEAT YOU PRODUCE IN YOUR SLEEP ACTUALLY MAKES YOU FEEL COLDER, THEY SAY.

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO SLEEP IN THE NUDE IN YURT HUTS.



THE CLOTHES ARE TRIMMED WITH FUR SO THE WIND DOESN'T GET IN.

THE FRONT IS DOUBLE-BREASTED TO KEEP OUT DRAFTS.

BY THE WAY, WHAT THE HORSE-MOUNTED NOMADS WEAR IS AN ORIGINAL FORM OF RIDER'S SUIT.

EXTRA-LONG SLEEVES SERVE INSTEAD OF GLOVES.

THE PANT LEGS ARE TUCKED INTO THE BOOTS.

IT'S THE SAME FOR THE MONGOL COLLARS.



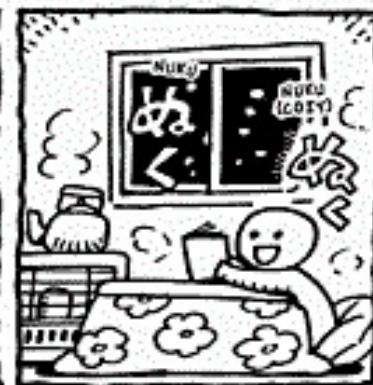
WHAT?

WELL, I THINK HARDLY ANYONE SLEEPS IN THE NUDE THESE DAYS.



NO! IT'S COLD OUT THERE!

ARE YOU NEVER GOING OUTSIDE?



SMITH WOULD FOLLOW HAWKING AROUND, DOING HIS GRUNT WORK AT PUBLIC SCHOOL.

I'M THINKING THE GAP BETWEEN THEIR AGES IS SOMEWHERE BETWEEN SEVEN AND TEN YEARS.

AND WE FINALLY MEET HAWKING, WHO WAS ONLY A NAME PRIOR TO THIS.

IT KIND OF TOOK LONGER THAN I ANTICIPATED.

NOW, WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT, WE MADE IT TO ANKARA WITH MR. SMITH!

REALLY? BEFORE YOU REALIZED IT?



WHICH WAY
DID I HAVE
TALAG'S
TURBAN
WRAPPED
AGAIN?

OF COURSE
I REMEMBER
HER WELL!

YOU
MEAN
ME!?

WELL, YOU
ARE THE
AUTHOR.

FOR THOSE
OF YOU
WHO DON'T
REMEMBER,
I'LL REFER
YOU BACK TO
VOLUME 3.

AND FINALLY,
WE GET
TO TALAG,
WHO...I'M
REALLY NOT
SURE YOU'LL
ACTUALLY
REMEMBER.

TO SOLVE THE
PROBLEM THAT
I NEVER GET
ENOUGH EXERCISE,
I'M RIDING MY
AEROBIKE. I FEEL
LIKE A HAMSTER.

KARA
カラ
カラ
カラ
カラ
カラ



KARA
カラ
KARA (RATTLE)
カラ
カラ
カラ
カラ

...WE HEAD
OFF ON A
JOURNEY
TOWARD
VOLUME II!

Central
Asia Quest

AND SO, WITH
NEW PARTY
MEMBERS AND
BRAND-NEW ITEMS
IN HAND—AND
NOW THAT ALI'S
MONEY BAG IS
NOT WANTING
FOR COINS...

I BOUGHT
ALL KINDS
OF THINGS
AND AM
TRYING
THEM ALL!

NEW WATER-
COLOR PAPER
AND SUCH...

WHITE
IBIG
ACRYL
DENE

ALSO, WHILE I
WASN'T PAYING
ATTENTION, ALL
SORTS OF GREAT
NEW PAINTING
EQUIPMENT CAME
ON THE MARKET!

IT'S
SO
FUN!

ALL KINDS OF
BRUSHES...

HOLBEIN
ARTISTS'
PAN COLOR

LIKE SOLID
CAKE COLORS
AND SUCH...

UP TILL NOW, I
HAD TO PUT ONE
AWAY WHEN I
USED THE NEXT.

YAAAAAY!

AND I GOT
MYSELF A DESK
WHERE I COULD
SPREAD OUT ALL
MY PAINTS AND
TOOLS FOR COLOR
WORK!

RECENTLY, I
MOVED FOR
THE FIRST
TIME IN TEN
YEARS!

I HAVE A
SEPARATE DESK FOR
DRAWING MY BLACK
AND WHITE PAGES.

IT'S DIFFICULT
FOR ME TO
WRITE BACK,
BUT I'M TRYING
TO THINK OF
SOMETHING!

SO, UNTIL
NEXT
VOLUME!!

ALSO, I
GOT CARDS,
LETTERS, AND
ALL SORTS OF
STUFF FROM
PEOPLE!

IT
MADE
ME SO
HAPPY!
THANK
YOU!!

REALLY!
THANK YOU
SO MUCH!

I'M SORRY
IT TOOK SO
LONG TO
THANK YOU!!

IT'S IN MY
HANDS RIGHT
NOW!

OH! IT'S
PRETTY!

ALSO, LAST
BUT NOT
LEAST...

...SOMEBODY
MADE AND
GAVE ME THE
EMBROIDERY
THAT I DREW
PARIYA MAKING
IN VOLUME 8!

END!

A BRIDE'S STORY ⑩



KAORU MORI

TRANSLATION: WILLIAM FLANAGAN

LETTERING: ABIGAIL BLACKMAN

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